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CONTENTS

June, 1978

Vol. 2, No. 3

EDITORIAL.....	4
'STAR WARS' IS BETTER THAN 'CLOSE ENCOUNTERS'/ 'CE3K' IS BETTER THAN 'STAR WARS'	5
By Tom Rogers and Douglas Murray	
THE GARDEN OF TIME	14
By J.G. Ballard	
THE GIRLS OF 'SPACE: 1999'	16
By Tom Rogers	
DARK STAR.....	20
By Douglas Murray	
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO TOBOR?.....	26
By Frank Verzyl	
EXTRATERRESTRIALS ON EARTH: A SHORT HISTORY.....	40
By Tom Rogers	
GIANT MONSTERS VS. ALIEN INVADERS	48
By Tom Rogers	
THINGS TO COME.....	55
By Allan Asherman	



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SPACE WARS

EDITORIAL



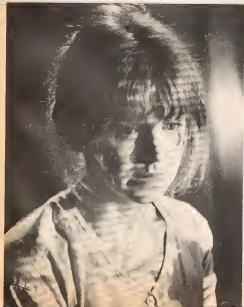
We are a transition generation. We sit in our rudimentary homes, built of wood and clay brick, and play with our immensely sophisticated color televisions, computer games, electronic cameras and other devices that seem removed from our surroundings by light years. It took the combined skill of generations to make these objects appear, but now technology seems to have gone into hyperwarp, and they fall from the heavens by the carload, filling up our homes and our cars and our lives like rain.

Perhaps we were born a little too early, or maybe a little too late. Within our lifetimes, life as we know it will probably be changed beyond even a visionary's imagination. With the flood of holograms, clones, advances and technologies yet undreamed of, the universe of man will expand and mutate into something that will either be a nightmare or a blessing, or perhaps something beyond these metaphors for good and evil.

We are a transition generation, between the mud and stones of the past and the unfathomably intricate wonderworld of the future. Our futuristic objects appear like magic, and sit and watch us like strangers in a white room.

THE EDITORS

'STAR WARS'
is better than
'CLOSE ENCOUNTERS'
'CLOSE ENCOUNTERS'
is better than
'STAR WARS'



'CLOSE ENCOUNTERS'

■ The critical portion of American movie-goers have traditionally suffered from a serious case of **myopia sophisticates**; those afflicted with this disease give critical praise only to those films which they consider "respectable" (by their traditional definition). Thus, through the years, there has been a tendency to ignore films that are too popular, or too "arty" or too "experimental." One key example of

this is Orson Welles classic, **Citizen Kane**.

Citizen Kane is now generally acknowledged as the finest American movie ever made. However, upon its release in 1939, the critics either ignored it completely or berated it for its nontraditional cutting and narrative

Two jawas, small rodentlike creatures on Tatooine, track down stray robots.

By Douglas Murray

techniques. Amazingly, it did not even win that year's Academy Award for best picture, an honor given instead to the decent, but familiarly maudlin **How Green Was My Valley**.

Similarly, when **Jaws** swept its way onto American screens two years ago, although it was powerful enough to rapidly become the top-grossing American film of its time, it wasn't good enough to garner the

George Lucas and Steven Spielberg have turned 1977 into one of the greatest years ever for sci-fi fans. **Star Wars** and **Close Encounters of the Third Kind** have given the genre an excitement that hasn't been experienced since the days of 2001. While it's difficult to say which one is really better, everyone seems to have their preference, and we now give you two good cases for both sides.

By Tom Rogers

Studios would ever attempt. Aside from the intentional humor, it is a serious story of good against evil—with real heroes, who overcome their detestable foes.

Close Encounters of the Third Kind has a much more serious drawback: **nothing at all** is explained. Everything depends upon personal interpretation. Because of this, coupled with John Williams' beautiful score and writer/director Steven Spielberg's devious storyline and direction, people are forced to "read into" the presentation. Most viewers leave the screenings with an overwhelming sense of optimism; my wife and I did, and everyone we know experienced the

■ The major argument that is raging today among science-fiction fans concerns the two special-effects spectacles of 1977. Many say that Fox's **Star Wars** is better than Columbia's **Close Encounters of the Third Kind**, while others insist that the opposite is true. I agree with the former group. By far, **Star Wars** is superior to **CESK**, as it is affectionately known. Granted, there are things about the latter that make it a marvelous flick, but **Star Wars** happens to be truly magnificent. Actually, they are movies that are so dissimilar they should not be compared, but I intend to deal with them on the whole, criticizing them

as motion pictures for their story content, characterization and so on.

Critics complain that **Star Wars** lacks intellectual content. They constantly bring up the fact that writer/director George Lucas had always intended it to be a fairy tale, and this was how it turned out. Although this is very true, compare it to other fantasies and see what conclusions you arrive at. The production is a thrilling, simplistic space opera at its best—in essence, it is a futuristic western and war movie combined. It is fast-paced, exciting and definitely thrilling to watch. Yes, it is an intergalactic fairy tale, but it is certainly not something that Walt Disney



'STAR WARS'

best-picture Oscar—obviously a snob reaction to its nonart look.

This year, two science-fiction films seem to be in the same boat: **Star Wars** and **Close Encounters of the Third Kind**.

Star Wars, although initially downgraded by many critics as Buck Rogers Kid Stuff, has over the course of the year made more money than any film ever shown; built a merchandising industry that is the most viable and profitable in the history of films; and, incidentally, won over the hearts of millions. It

seems certain to garner several Academy Award nominations, and a good bet to win Best Picture—but is it best? Or is this merely an overreaction to its popular success, and an underreaction to a superior film?

Close Encounters of the Third Kind, on the other hand, is a film laboring under several serious disadvantages: First, and most importantly, it was released in the same year as **Star Wars**, a film of enormous popularity; comparisons are inevitable.

Second, it was made and released under a very effective shield of security. Although this shield was intended to prevent leaks, it has had a secondary effect of antagonizing

many influential movie critics. There is nothing that irks one of these "experts" more than being told he will have to see a film with the rest of us mere mortals, and, of course, he gets his revenge through his critique, which can often be devastating to a weak production.

Finally, unlike **Star Wars** "May the Force be with You" and the ever-popular Darth Vader, **Close Encounters** has no real catch phrase or really prominent and unusual character to hang either an advertising or merchandising campaign on. Despite all of this, the film is doing amazingly well, racking up more than 50 million dollars in ticket sales in its first month of

(Continued on page 8)

Jillian Guiler is horrified as she witnesses her son being kidnaped by a UFO.



same reaction. However, upon careful analysis, one finds that the aliens are not really the good guys that we consider them to be.

Think about it: for many years, they have been coming to Earth, kidnaping a lot of people and causing a great deal of anguish, sorrow, fear and accidents. Finally, they land "in public" and discharge what appear to be the missing people. Without any definite form of communication, more people (volunteers, this time) end up on the mother spaceship, and the craft lifts off, unopposed, without any sort of explanation. If the returnees are human, many of them have had their lives ruined because they have been away for an awfully long period of time.

But how do we know that they are the real things? Suppose they're clones, illusions, zombies, mental



slaves of the aliens or aliens selves? And, if they are indeed human, have they been brain-damaged? They looked quite dazed as they emerged from the craft. Remember productions like **Clones**, **Star Trek's** "The Menagerie," **The Invisible Invaders**, **It Conquered the World**, **I Married a Moontar from Outer Space** and many others of this sort? Undoubtedly, a sequel to **CE3K** would prove very interesting—and, hopefully, illuminating.

I'm not trying to be an alarmist, but I am pointing out that everything in **Close Encounters** has to be personally interpreted, and this somewhat hinders my enjoyment. [I still love it, though.] In **Star Wars**, everything is black and white; we know who the heroes are, and their enemies are obvious. There is no confusion, and nothing is unclear.

Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill) and Ben Kenobi (Alec Guinness) negotiate a passage to the Alderaan system with Han Solo (Harrison Ford) and Chewbacca the Wookiee.

Thus, Lucas' movie is vastly superior in this respect.

Now let's look at the strongest points of both motion pictures: the special effects. Without a doubt, John Dykstra (**Star Wars**) and Douglas Trumbull (**CE3K**) are geniuses, and their work knocks you right out of your seat. However, there are distinct differences in the styles they employed for the titles in question. Undeniably, there are many more sfx sequences in **Star Wars**, and they are generally much more complex than the ones in **CE3K** is the mother ship itself, and the sound effects and music that

(Continued on page 8)

'CLOSE ENCOUNTERS'

(Continued from page 7)
domestic release.

But why is *Close Encounters* superior to *Star Wars*? The answer is a simple one: *Close Encounters* does more than merely entertain. It makes a point, and teaches a lesson. *Star Wars* functions purely as an adventure movie, a kind of "Adventures of Robin Hood" in outer space. Its characters—Luke Skywalker, Han Solo, Princess Leia and the rest—are strictly one-dimensional caricatures used merely to advance the story line and give the audience someone to identify with. The whole point of the movie, if it can be said to have one, is that good tri-

umphs over evil, no matter what the odds, because the "Force" is with the good. Now, if this isn't the most popular theme for movies (and TV) ever, then I don't know what is.

But the simple morality play of good vs. evil is somewhat perverted here. There is never really any question in our minds that good will triumph; therefore, the introduction of "the Force," while a nice idea, is hardly important to the story. After all, Luke might merely have gotten lucky in that last torpedo run and not needed any "spiritual" help.

Close Encounters, on the other hand, has characters with some depth and identity. Richard Drey-

fuss's Roy Neary is not merely a likeable dope; he's everyman with everyman's problem: how to make the world believe the unbelievable, or, failing this, how to reassure himself that the unbelievable is real and not just the imaginings of an unbalanced mind—his own.

Melinda Dillon's Jillian Guler, on the other hand, is a person with a much more serious problem. Not only must she convince "rational" people of the impossible, she must also get them to take action, any kind of action, to rescue her son from the unknown.

Both of these very real people, (Continued on page 11)

'STAR WARS'

(Continued from page 7)

accompany its appearance are enough to bowl you over. However, while the scale model is very nicely designed, its mind-boggling effect is achieved through skillful lighting. Take away the brights, and you've got a dull-looking miniature. All of *CE3K's* beautiful *spfx* center around very bright, colorful optics, and this is, in essence, a cheap trick to play on the viewers. It is because of this lighting that matte lines are almost nonexistent, but look closely and in most instances you will see that the central objects were filmed against an apparently black background. Unfortunately, some

matte lines are rather obvious in *Star Wars*, but if the miniatures had been obscured and highlighted by neons, then most of the overlay flaws would have disappeared. Furthermore, since the spaceships and such were shown against normal sky, star-filled backgrounds and whatnot, the complexity of the *spfx* is much greater. Again, *Star Wars* is better—there are more special-effects scenes, and they are better employed.

From the opening, the viewer is caught up in the action of *Star Wars*. It is the fastest-moving two-hour movie I know of, and this quality holds up even if you have seen the

flick before. Contrastingly, *CE3K* lags in the middle—particularly if you have seen it before. Likewise, the opening is weak and confusing, and the French scientist's use of an interpreter throughout the story is very annoying, and seemingly pointless. Naturally, there are some very good, suspenseful scenes in *Close Encounters*, but the adventurous mood is irregular. *Star Wars*, on the other hand, maintains its excitement constantly. Most audiences become deeply involved with *Star Wars*, and subconsciously they become a part of the movie's action. As far as *CE3K* is concerned, though, the viewer is merely an observer, mainly because the entire sequence of events remains a mystery to the end—and beyond. True, we are caught up in some of the action, but in *Star Wars* the empathy goes way beyond that.

(Continued on page 11)



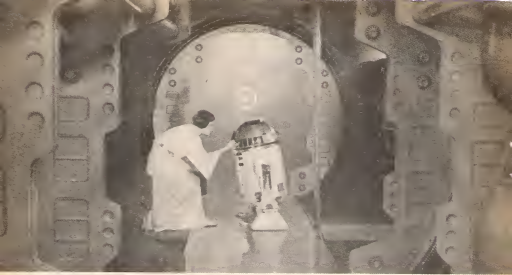
▲ Barry Guler, played by Carey Guffey, is about to experience the strangest encounter of his short life.

Governor Tarkin, Darth Vader and the executive Imperial officers plan the destruction of the rebel stronghold.



Aluc Guinness plays Ben Kenobi, one of the greatest warriors in the Old Republic before the rise of the sinister Galactic Empire (from *Star Wars*).





'CLOSE ENCOUNTERS'

(Continued from page 8)

with very real problems (no matter how fantastic their cause), are extremely easy for us to identify with. Our first close look at Roy Neary, family man, shows us that he is a real person. He makes mistakes; he's not perfect. In short, he's just

◀ Princess Leia (Carrie Fisher) places a message for help to Ben Kenobi inside Artoo-Detoo.

like us. He is not the offspring, of some legendary heroic order, or a man who wields an invincible force. He has normal abilities, and normal difficulties solving abnormal problems.

Similarly, Jillian Guiler's love for her child, a love that carries her out of a sickbed and into an adventure not of this earth, is a very human feeling—a feeling that is manifested by her unhesitating leap

under the very wheels of Neary's truck to save her baby. Jillian is a normal human. She is not a planetary princess with the resources of years of training and breeding and the command of an entire rebel force, but a woman with only a woman's resources of love, courage and compassion to draw upon.

Similarly, Terri Garr's Ronnie Neary is extremely unlikeable in her

(Continued on page 12)



'STAR WARS'

(Continued from page 9)

As far as characterization goes, **Star Wars** also overpowers **CE3K**. The heroes of Fox's gem are more easily identifiable, and we therefore care much more for their well-being. Similarly, we need villains to direct our antagonism against, so we enjoy loathing the bad guys. When Obi-Wan appears to die, we are saddened, and we are joyful when

◀ Luke Skywalker persuades Han Solo to help save Princess Leia.

Luke and Han are honored at the conclusion. Some say that the personages in **Star Wars** are shallow, but I disagree.

In any event, they are nowhere as erratic as the people in **Close Encounters**. There is little characterization in the latter: Roy Neary is a nut job, Jillian Guiler says almost nothing, Ronnie Neary doesn't care about, or believe in, her husband and Claude Lacombe is devious and hardly ever communicates in English. Nonetheless, we

▲ Chewbacca, Han Solo (Harrison Ford), Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill), Artoo-Detoo and See-Threepio are rewarded by Princess Leia (Carrie Fisher) for saving the rebellion.

are happy when Jillian and her adorable son are reunited, and overwhelmed when the hero is accepted as a guest of the aliens.

Our feelings are, without a doubt, largely caused by the music of both films. Despite the fact that Williams did both scores, there is a vast difference between the two. The music of **Star Wars** is generally exciting, adventurous, reflecting the fast-paced action of each scene. There are a few slow themes, but

(Continued on page 12)

'CLOSE ENCOUNTERS'

(Continued from page 11)

inability to face her husband's problem, and her unwillingness even to listen to it.

Whereas **Star Wars** is a simple adventure story, **Close Encounters** becomes a study of character in the face of adversity—and a detective story of some subtlety. After we, the audience, have been shown that the UFOs do indeed exist, and that the government knows they exist, we are sent back to the struggles of Roy and Jillian, unable to comfort or help them as they go through an agony of insecurity and self-doubt, a punishment that is only ended when the government, attempting to hide the alien's landing place, inadvertently shows it to the only people on earth who are truly looking for it.

It is from this point on that **Close Encounters** shows its true superiority to **Star Wars**. Once they arrive at that hidden government base for the hoped communication with alien star craft, both Roy Neary and Jillian Guiler undergo what is essentially a religious experience. From the start the film

has paralleled the activities of the aliens with happenings that are generally regarded as biblical or religious. A few centuries ago the "lights in the sky," "burning bushes" and "voices" from heaven would have been instantly hailed as divine revelations. Now they are seen merely as unusual phenomena to be studied and observed.

The aliens' final appearance is something more. During most of the film (right up to the last few minutes), we never see the aliens. Indeed, the only character who does see the creatures is young Barry Guiler, and he seems entranced by their appearance. Our only view of the aliens is through their ships and their devices—and these stress the importance of light to the beings.

The ships shine with light, multi-colored and brilliant. Their search apparatus is a blindingly bright beam, that causes strange gravitational effects, to be sure, but a beam of light nonetheless. When the aliens finally do open their craft to our scrutiny, what we see is,

essentially, a brilliant light, a light through which first the missing people (pilots, children, pick-ups from down through the ages) emerge. They emerge as if reborn from the light of heaven.

When the aliens themselves emerge, it is from this same glowing nimbus of light—a light that serves not so much to illuminate as to punctuate their similarity with, and differences from, mankind.

Compare this with the aliens of **Star Wars**, aliens seen only in the grimy streets of Mos Eisley spaceport and the sordid, dark interior of the spaceport bar. Obviously these are creatures that are different from men in appearance—but not in character.

The ships in **Star Wars** are functional objects, built for speed, or durability, or cargo capacity—not for esthetic value or beauty. In contrast, all of the alien "saucers" in **Close Encounters** are vehicles obviously built for their appearance, an appearance that must please the esthetics of the builders as much as fulfill their technology.

'STAR WARS'

(Continued from page 11)

these are also full of life, and they evoke a pleasant mood in most cases.

Close Encounters contains music that is mainly beautiful, slow and very eerie. The proper emotions are evoked from the audience through the masterful use of the soundtrack, and it is largely because of this that we are so caught up in the finale. Some of it frightens, while other parts soothe, and at times we are more influenced by the subtle music than by the sequence of events. I have both albums, and I favor listening to the one from **Star Wars** because it is so lively and appropriate. For calmer moods, I choose the one from **CE3K**—but this does not happen often. Consequently, I feel that the score for **Star Wars** is definitely superior—although I absolutely love the five-note theme of **Close Encounters**.

In **Star Wars**, everyone is an alien. However, we feel comfortable with the humans depicted, and it doesn't bother us that they are from other worlds—and in the past. Of course, there are also many non humans that amuse and intrigue us. The barroom scene, for instance, is a big favorite among fans, and collectors would give their eyeteeth for photographic material showing the strange beings. These creatures charm and entertain us, and they enhance the film with their presence. There are odd-looking aliens, 'droids and even humans encased in robotlike armor. And one of these—Chewbacca, the formidable Wookiee—is well loved, despite the fact that he only growls, grunts, roars and purrs.

In **Close Encounters** we don't get to see the otherworldly visitors until the very ending. There are only two types, and the majority of these

resemble lithe, large-domed, young children with very long fingers. Their apparent leader—who is long, spindly, taller and animated—makes up for the disappointment of their appearance. The utilization of this artificial creation is wonderful, and its mimicry of Lacombe's facial and hand movements are a joy to behold. Nonetheless, the presentation of the "invaders" is, overall, somewhat annoying. They resemble extraterrestrial beings that have been recorded in actual (?) reports, and for this reason they are far from thrilling. The inhuman aliens of **Star Wars** are much more intriguing, and they have greater appeal.

Close Encounters deals with humanity's quest for the unknown. Since the 1940s, people have been intrigued by UFO sightings. It is highly unlikely that we are the only intelligent creatures in the universe, and it is just possible that our world is being studied by more advanced beings who, hopefully, have peaceful intentions. Today, many folks believe in the existence of flying saucers and the like. More and more sightings

The final proof of all this is, of course, in the "final" spaceship. The ultimate vessel in **Star Wars** is the Imperial Death Star, a titanic vessel built with the power to destroy an entire planet—a vessel that is as big as a small planetoid and in the shape of a spheroid, the most economical design possible.

Contrast this with the mother ship in **Close Encounters**. This too is the "ultimate" alien vessel, but it has no visible weaponry. Rather, its function seems to be as home to the star-traveling visitors, a home designed for beauty and comfort rather than for power and economy of design. The mother ship is a giant city, but not a mortal city; rather a city of heaven, a fairy city of pastel lighting and sky-scraping towers. A city fit for the habitation of beings more than human.

When this city makes its arrival on earth, the feeling that sweeps over the film's characters (and, indeed, its audience) is one of awe—but not the awe of superior technology. Rather, the almost religious awe of the inferior to the superior, for it is painfully obvious that whoever inhabits this space-going city is not only above our technology, but also above our mortal failings.

are reported, and there are a great many "encounters" on file. Some of these cannot be explained away. We are always seeking answers, and **CE3K** deals with characters who make actual contact with extraterrestrials. Unfortunately, the events all take place on modern-day Earth, and the surroundings are consequently all too common.

In **Star Wars** nothing is recognizable. Everything occurs on other planets, in another galaxy, and the sets are all new, unexpected and give the film a true sense of wonder. The lavish, often spacious sets—some of which are artificially enlarged miniatures—were designed to be as subtly alien in nature as possible. There is always something visible that is uncommon, and this enhances the viewer's enjoyment tremendously. Not so with **CE3K**, except during the short periods that the saucers are visible. There are too many recognizable things in **Close Encounters**, and not enough UFOs.

This leads to another **CE3K** problem. I have already mentioned how the main characters are erratic

Ultimately, this feeling of awe becomes one of joy and acceptance as Roy Neary, a man who has become both our alter-ego and our friend, ascends into this ship of light to become one with its inhabitants, to travel into the heavens with beings who are as gods.

This feeling is reinforced by the appearance of the alien leader who emerges from the ship for a final communication with UFO project leader Claude Lacombe. This confrontation is not one of equal to equal, but of parent to child. The impression is one of benign power—a power which manifests itself in the huge ship and the aliens' unmistakably superior technology, and benignity apparent in the gentle smile and in the repetition of the five key symbols.

Ultimately, the success or failure of any motion picture lies in the effect it has on its audience. Viewers of **Star Wars** become completely engrossed in the battle between the forces of good and those of evil, so engrossed that they easily overlook the weaknesses in plot and characterization, just as they overlooked similar weaknesses in the adventures of Errol Rynn and his ilk in the forties and fifties. When the

and shallow, but many subordinate players are improperly portrayed. For instance, the military seemingly had no special weapons at Devil's Tower; they were totally unprepared for a possible invasion, and this was ridiculous. Seeing as how we **Homo sapiens** are so suspicious and untrusting, we would have been ready to face the worst. There was no reference to anti aircraft emplacements, missiles, counter-attack units, or air force fighters that would have been used in the event of an invasion. Are we to assume that the military was prepared? If so, this carefully done movie should have included something along these lines. However, it was probably dispensed with because of the desired mood; we are led to believe that the aliens are friendly, so for once we trusted a possible enemy, and it paid off. Highly unlikely; I know how the military mind works. **Star Wars** did not contain any such discrepancies, and it is far less flawed than **CE3K**.

Yes, **Close Encounters** is severely flawed. There are erratic characters, poor judgments, a

film ends and the viewers must return to reality, they go with a feeling of satisfaction and rightness, a feeling that is rapidly dispelled by the realities of the world outside.

Close Encounters works in a different way. The audience becomes enmeshed with the identities of the main characters. They tremble at the danger to young Barry, they cry with joy at his return to his obviously loving mother, they gasp in awe at the revelation of the immense alien mother ship. Eventually they leave the theater with the warm glow of an experience, one that is religious in nature. Once outside they don't return to the workaday world; they look to the sky, for it is here, they now feel, from which deliverance and knowledge may eventually come.

Both films deliver to their audience, but each in a different way. **Star Wars** yields two hours of entertainment and a warm glow of vicarious accomplishment. **Close Encounters** provides two hours of experience and a warm glow of hope—a hope that perhaps, after all, we are not alone. ●

series of coincidences, things that are forgotten and unexplained and so on. **Star Wars** is far superior because it has human characters, fewer inconsistencies, more explanations, more excitement and better special effects. It also utilizes its budget better, and it is more exciting. The aliens of **CE3K** are potential villains, and no evidence whatsoever is given to indicate that they are benevolent. Sure, they return Jillian's boy, but has he been changed in some diabolical manner? At the conclusion, all is forgiven, and it is assumed that the mother ship will return some day. But will it?

In **Star Wars** "we" kill the enemies and reward the heroes; events are clear. The production concerns itself with extremes that are obvious, while **CE3K** deals with possibilities that are never explained. I love both films, but **Star Wars** is my favorite of all time—for many reasons. **Close Encounters** falls short of my expectations, and it is generally a cop-out in that it leaves so many questions unanswered.

Nice try, Steve. ●

THE GARDEN OF TIME

By J.G. BALLARD

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J.G. Ballard is one of the eeriest, thought-provoking writers to hit sci-fi in a long time. His book, *The Atrocity Exhibition*, blends William Burroughs and time warp phenomena with sharp insights into the subconscious mass psyche. Here's one of his earliest works, reprinted especially for Space Wars.

■ Toward evening, when the great shadow of the Palladian villa filled the terrace, Count Axel left his library and walked down the wide rococo steps among the time flowers. A tall, imperious figure in a black velvet jacket, a gold tiepin glinting below his George V beard, cane held stiffly in a white-gloved hand, he surveyed the exquisite crystal flowers without emotion, listening to the sounds of his wife's harpsichord, as she played a Mozart rondo in the music room, echo and vibrate through the translucent petals.

The garden of the villa extended for some two hundred yards below the terrace, sloping down to a miniature lake spanned by a white bridge, a slender pavilion on the opposite bank. Axel rarely ventured as far as the lake; most of the time flowers grew in a small grove just below the terrace, sheltered by the high wall which encircled the estate. From the terrace he could see over the wall to the plain beyond, a continuous expanse of open ground that rolled in great swells to the horizon, where it rose slightly before finally dipping from sight. The plain surrounded the house on all sides, its drab emptiness emphasizing the seclusion and mellowed magnificence of the villa. Here, in the garden, the air seemed brighter, the sun warm-

er, while the plain was always dull and remote.

As was his custom before beginning his evening stroll, Count Axel looked out across the plain to the final rise, where the horizon was illuminated like a distant stage by the fading sun. As the Mozart chimed delicately around him, flowing from his wife's graceful hands, he saw that the advance column of an enormous army was moving slowly over the horizon. At first glance, the long ranks seemed to be progressing in orderly lines, but on closer inspection, it was apparent that, like the obscured detail of a Goya landscape, the army was composed of a vast throng of people, men and women, interspersed with a few soldiers in ragged uniforms, pressing forward in a disorganized tide. Some labored under heavy loads suspended from crude yokes around their necks, others struggled with cumbersome wooden carts, their hands wrenching at the wheel spokes, a few trudged on alone, but all moved on at the same pace, bowed backs illuminated in the fleeting sun.

The advancing throng was almost too far away to be visible, but even as Axel watched, his expression aloof yet observant, it came perceptibly nearer, the vanguard of an

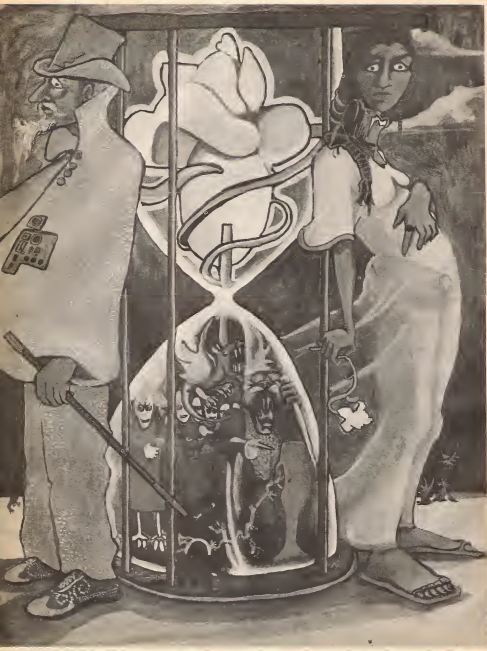
immense rabble appearing from below the horizon. At last, as the daylight began to fade, the front edge of the throng reached the crest of the first swell below the horizon, and Axel turned from the terrace and walked down among the time flowers.

The flowers grew to a height of about six feet, their slender stems, like rods of glass, bearing a dozen leaves, the one transparent fronds frosted by the fossilized veins. At the peak of each stem was the time flower, the size of a goblet, the opaque outer petals enclosing the crystal heart. Their diamond brilliance contained a thousand faces, the crystal seeming to drain the air of its light and motion. As the flowers swayed slightly in the evening air, they glowed like flame-tipped spears.

Many of the stems no longer bore flowers, and Axel examined them all carefully, a note of hope now and then crossing his eyes as he searched for any further buds. Finally he selected a large flower on the stem nearest the wall, removed his gloves, and with his strong fingers snapped it off.

As he carried the flower back onto the terrace, it began to sparkle and deliquesce, the light trapped within

(Continued on page 61)





▲ The ageless Joan Collins is the center of attention in this photo from the episode, "Mission of the Darians."



▲ Catherine Schell from the first season episode, "Guardian of Piri."



▲ Well-known British actress Judy Geeson starred in this episode of 1999 entitled, "Another Time, Another Place."



▲ Barbara Bain as Dr. Helena Russell, chief medical officer in charge of life support systems, including the psychological and emotional stability of all life forms on Moonbase Alpha.

THE GIRLS OF SPACE: 1999

By Tom Rogers

Time now to feast our eyes upon some luscious lovelies who are literally "out of this world." Let's look at the heavenly bodies better known as THE GIRLS OF SPACE: 1999.

■ Surprisingly enough, few articles on ITC Entertainment's **Space: 1999** have appeared in professional magazines. The expensive series lasted for two years, and during that time 47 episodes were aired (the second season entry, *The Bringers of Wonder*, was a two-parter). This, the most lavish of Gerry Anderson's British series, quickly gained a large gathering of fans who religiously followed the exploits of Moonbase Alpha every week.

This study deals with the women of that program—some of whom were very sexy. The two resident heroines, Helena and Maya, experienced some hairy times, but in addition, alien gals turned up in almost every adventure. Many of them were played by American and British stars, and most of the characters—while beautiful—turned out to be evil. Nonetheless, they were nice to look at.

Helena Russell (Barbara Bain), Alpha's chief medical officer, experienced some embarrassing things during her space career. In "Another Time, Another Place," she was part

of a landing party that traveled to a duplicate—but devastated—Earth. There, she encountered an older version of herself, who was presumed to be her sometime in the future. Because of a number of second season occurrences, this story is considered to have taken part in an alternate universe; therefore, the characters found on the planet were not our heroes. *Full Circle* went the opposite route, and showed her regressing into a cavewoman-type; she never looked better. Her atomic structure was altered in *Ring Around the Moon*, resulting in her teleportation to the planet Triton. Upon returning to Alpha, she was under enemy control for a while. Early in the second season entry, *New Adam, New Eve*, she was hypnotized into making out with Tony Verdeschi (Tony Anhalt) for purposes of mating with him. Fortunately, this alien plot was interfered with by the arrival of a blue gorilla, who also tried to make it with her. Finally, in *One Moment of Humanity*, a "male" android who wanted



Friends or foes? The famous anthropologist Raan (Peter Cushing) from the planet Zeno; Commander Dione (Caroline Morimer) from the planet Bethe; and Captain Zantor (Christopher Lee), a space fugitive.

to gain emotions tried the same sort of thing. She certainly had a knack for attracting weirdos.

So much for Helens. The **Alpha Child** was the first—and only—baby ever born on the moon after it left Earth's orbit. Within hours, though, he grew into a full-grown, rational man because his body had been taken over by an extraterrestrial mentality. The child's mother (Cyd Hayman) died soon afterward, and her form was immediately possessed by the mind of Rens, an alien woman. Later, when the otherworlders' enemies arrived in powerful spaceships, the process was reversed; the newborn earthling became a baby again, and his mother returned to life, (don't ask me how) and regained her own senses.

Getting back to **Another Time, Another Place**, that episode also featured Judy Geeson as a guest-star. She was cast as Regine Kesslenn, who suddenly became clairvoyant when the Moon's passage through outer space accelerated tremendously. After predicting their forthcoming orbit around the parallel Earth, she claimed that she was married to series regular Alan Carter (Nick Tate), who hardly knew her. She died soon afterward, and X-rays revealed that she had two separate brain patterns!

What appeared to be the most fascinating female of all turned up in **The Black Sun**. As the moon was irresistibly drawn into a black hole in space, strange things began to happen. Heroes John Koenig (Martin Landau) and Victor Bergman (Berry Morse) aged prematurely, and soon afterward they encountered a being that had the voice of a woman. Undoubtedly a vastly superior being, she (?) told them a little about the structure of the cosmos. "It is a living being," she claimed, "and every star is a cell in an incredibly vast brain." The entity added, "I am the known and the unknown, the seen and the unseen. All things come from me; I am not part of them." Bergman inquired whether she was God, but their hostess did not answer. The two men

(Continued on page 63)



This astronaut is space surfing down to the nearest planet at the conclusion of *Dark Star*.



DARK STAR

It's difficult to define the ingredients that go into the making of a cult film. It could be the gruesome gore of a *Night of the Living Dead*, or a psychedelic light show from 2001. *Dark Star* is quickly becoming a contender for cult status.

By Douglas Murray

off earth. The very transmitter of the message gives us some clue to the seriousness of their mission: for he is nothing more than a space-force corporal, and his prasing words and talk of an earth-wide day of mourning for the dead captain of the ship (killed when his chair short circuited and electrocuted him) ring very hollowly on our ears, particularly when his first act is to deny their request for relief.

Anyway, the crew has found another unstable planet and, jammed into the tiniest control room imaginable, is about to destroy it.

Lt. Doodittle, now in command, is a tall, rather saturnine man with a

wild black beard. He is sitting at the center console, giving orders to the rest. To his right is Pinback, short, dumpy, with wild, receding hair and a mustache; to his left, Boiler, tall and intense looking with full long hair and a handlebar. Together the three prepare one of their planet-busting missiles.

The planet-buster, long, boxy, is lowered from the huge bomb bay at the base of the ship. Pointed toward the planet, the warhead is armed and given final instructions by Pinback—verbally. For this is the ultimate in "smart" warheads, a missile that actually thinks and talks and is eager to be on its way for its

one-time mission].

Programmed, armed and released, the missile falls toward the offending planet while the *Dark Star*, shrouded in an electronic force field, moves at warp speed away from the area.

From a safe distance the ship turns and, from the vantage of his observation bubble, the fourth crew member, Astro-Navigator Talby, watches the rather spectacular explosion.

With another mission accomplished, the crew settles down into their usual routine. Returning to their scrummy quarters in a cargo hold (the original crew quarters having

■ *Dark Star* is a film that has quickly become a cult favorite. It is extremely successful in spoofing every convention of the deep space science fiction film it is made to represent.

For *Dark Star* is not a serious sci-fi film, despite the trappings of effects, models and engrossing light shows.

For those who haven't yet seen the film (and this will include many as it has not enjoyed wide release), it is the story of the space destroyer *Dark Star* and its multi-year mission to explore deep space, seek out unstable stars and planets, and destroy them to make their solar systems safe for human habitation. Now, while all this seems very sane

and possible, what you must realize is that this is an open-ended mission, that is, there is not a set time limit; the ship has already been out an indeterminate number of years and will remain out until it runs out of planet-destroying missiles!

In any case, we get our first look at the crew of the *Dark Star* receiving a message from the far-



This scene reflects the insanity of the crew who have been traveling in space for many years.

Captain Doolittle, from the motion picture, *Dark Star*.



Two men from the ship's crew fight over a laser rifle in *Dark Star*.

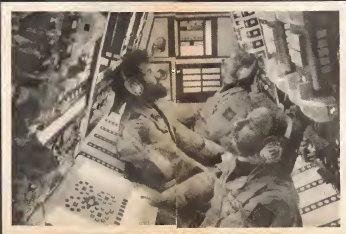
This is the control center of the ship, *Dark Star*.

been destroyed in another accident some years earlier), they settle down to such intellectual pursuits as mumbly-peggs, comic book reading and practical joking.

Pinback, taking one joke a hair too

far, is sent to feed their extraterrestrial pet, a globular creature with strange, claw-like hands and no visible features.

But while Pinback is bringing the creature's food into its room, the



thing escapes, and Pinback leads a merry chase throughout the reaches of the ship, culminating in a death-defying trip up and down the ship's elevator shaft, while hanging on the bottom of the elevator. Finally dragging himself back into the ship, Pinback corners the creature and shoots it with a tranquilizer gun, deflating it and sending it whizzing around the corridor, finally falling dead and flat at his feet.

Meanwhile, the ship has reached another unstable planet. The crew, returning to control, attempts another missile launch, but something has gone wrong; one of the control laser systems has been broken and the missile is stuck, but still armed and programmed to explode. Fortunately, Pinback is able to convince the bomb that there has been a mistake, and, reluctantly, it returns to its pod.

Some time later, with the problem apparently fixed, the missile is again extruded, again armed, and again programmed. Another malfunction occurs and again the missile is ready to go. This time Lt. Doolittle is forced to leave the ship, and talk with the missile face-to-face. Finally, using logic, he convinces the bomb that it cannot be sure that it indeed received a destruct order because it could not be sure of its perception of reality—that is, without any sensory apparatus of its own, it has no proof that anything outside exists at all.

Convinced, the missile returns to the ship, mulling this new information over. Doolittle, attempting to return, blows the escape hatch in the ship's stern, and is started to see Talby zip by him. The astronomer has been attempting to fix the commolaser and was in the hatch



▲ The Dark Star encounters an energy storm in outer space.

◀ This astronaut is about to witness a celestial phenomenon in this scene from the motion picture *Dark Star*.



when it was evacuated. Doolittle tries to fly to meet and rescue him.

While the two attempt a rendezvous in space, the bomb finally decides that it is indeed alone in the universe, and therefore must be God—in an attempt to bring forth light it explodes, and the ship is

vaporized.

Talby, hurled by the explosion, is captured by the gravity of a passing group of brightly colored asteroids—the Phoenix asteroids of song and story. Happily he leaves with them for an unending tour of the universe.

Doolittle, grabbing a piece of debris from the ship, finds himself drift-

ing toward the planet's atmosphere. Happily, he mounts the debris and rides the atmospheric waves as the first space-surfer before he meets his end in a flash of burning light.

Dark Star is a remarkable bit of satirical filming. Made by essentially a two-man team while at college at USC, *Dark Star* sparkles with a wit and originality rare in contemporary film making.

The very concept of a ship on an unending mission to make the galaxy totally safe for colonists, to the length that unstable planets are destroyed, is an insane one to begin with. Any crew would go out of their minds during such a mission. The crew of the *Dark Star* is almost there when they start.

Take Sgt. Pinback—he is not even who he appears to be. He was once a member of the ground crew, intellectually unfit for astronautics.

(Continued on page 86)

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■ Ask anyone what they associate with the early to mid-1950s in the United States, and certain subjects will always crop up; the McCarthy years, the Korean conflict, the cold war, the early days of television and a great deal of scientific progress made, particularly relating to the atomic bomb and space travel. Ask a science-fiction film buff, and he'll tell you that those were the most productive years for science-fiction films. More space-

ships, aliens, shrinking rays and robots appeared in local theaters than ever before, and probably since. Most of the great sci-fi classics were born during this time; films such as **Forbidden Planet**, **It Came From Outer Space**, **War of the Worlds**, **When Worlds Collide**, **This Island Earth**, **Them!**, and a number of others destined to be regarded as true classics of the science-fiction genre. These films gave rise to scores

of 'turkeys' soon afterward. "Grade Z" flicks such as **the Giant Gile Monster** and **War of the Satellites**. Somewhere between these two categories, lies a half-forgotten little gem called **Tobor, The Great** . . . certainly not a turkey, and yet hardly qualifying for the rank of classic.

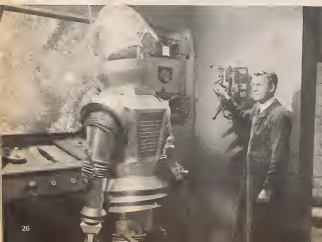
Tobor, The Great was released by Republic Films in 1954, and starred Charles Drake and Karin Booth (as hero and heroine) with

The professor was a kindly, forgettable, fool; the heroine was the "girl next door"; the hero was clean-cut and all-American, and the robot saved little children from danger. Father Knows Best couldn't hold a candle to Tobor the Great.

Young Gadge closed his eyes and sent out a plea to his big robot friend: "Tobor, wherever you are . . . help us . . . we need you, Tobor."

WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO TOBOR?

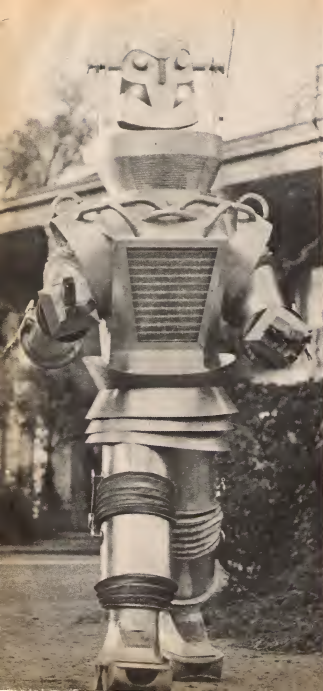
by Frank Verzyl



Dr. Harrison puts Tobor through some space simulation stress tests to see if the robot has the dexterity and stamina to pilot a spaceship.

Billy Chapin as boy genius "Gadge" Roberts. Also featured were Taylor Holmes, Steven Geray and Henry Kulky. The original story of **Tubor** was written by Carl Dudley, which was transformed into a shooting script by Phillip MacDonald. It was produced by Richard Goldstone and directed by Lee Sholem.

The story was basically simple, the photography straightforward and the acting adequate. The characters bore an astonishing resemblance to those on the **Superman** television series of the '50s, in their general appearance



Tabor is being summoned by the professor's miniature transmitter and is on his way to rescue his kidnaped master.

and behavior. The old professor is a kindly, forgetful, lovable fool; the hero your typical clean-cut All-American type; the heroine was the girl next door; the boy mischievous but lovable, with an incredible curiosity;



and the spies and thugs all look a bit too stupid, and of course, they all have that strange foreign accent you just can't seem to place. But aside from the stereotypes, the film works well.

The story: Dr. Ralph Harrison (our dashing All-American type scientist) resigns from his position with the Civil Interplanetary Flight Commission, when he witnesses an experiment in the effects of stress on the human body. A volunteer pilot is strapped into a centrifuge and spun around a test chamber at speeds far exceeding the speed of sound, which almost kills him. Dr. Harrison demands the C.I.F.C. find some other way of manning its data-gathering rockets into space, other than with human pilots.

That afternoon, Dr. Harrison re-

... gives a visit from a Prof. Nordstrom, who claims he has found a solution to the problem. Nordstrom invites Dr. Harrison to work with him in his underground lab beneath his palatial estate on the outskirts of Los Angeles. As they board a plane for California, the camera pans to a devious-looking individual watching them from behind a newspaper . . . obviously a Communist spy.

When they reach Professor Nordstrom's estate, Dr. Harrison is introduced to Nordstrom's family; his daughter Mrs. Roberts (whose husband was killed in Korea); her son Brian, also known as 'Gadge' since the little prodigy is always tinkering with electronic gadgets, just like his grandfather; and Nordstrom's chauffeur and lab assistant, Carl (who has an incredibly pronounced German accent). Nordstrom and Carl have been working on some top secret project for months in their underground laboratory beneath the house, and not even his daughter or inquisitive grandson have been given the slightest hint of what it could be. Needless to say, Gadge tries to go downstairs to the lab, when his grandfather takes Harrison for a grand tour below, but he is not permitted to follow.

The immense underground lab was once a wine cellar and contains very little equipment for such a large, spacious room. The better part of the lab is a raised platform, or stage, on which is constructed a ten-foot-high, metallic cylinder reaching from floor to ceiling. The rest of the floor is being set up as a sort of auditorium, as if Nordstrom was preparing for some kind of a floor show. Dr. Harrison is told distinguished members of the world press, representing 12 major newspapers in the United States, have been invited for the unveiling of Nordstrom's creation, which is concealed within the huge, metallic cylinder on stage.

On the day of the unveiling, an unwanted guest somehow makes it through the security measures set up by the good doctor and joins the group of journalists downstairs. It is the same man who had been spying on Nordstrom and Harrison back at the airport. He takes a seat in the back of the room and watches attentively to what the professor is about to show to the

world.

Nordstrom prepares the audience with an introductory speech about the problems of sending manned rockets into space without knowing the risks the pilots would be exposing themselves to. He says it would be best to send a few rockets into space manned by robots for the purpose of gathering data about conditions in space. The reporters express doubt that any machine would be suited for a task involving such intelligence, dexterity and stamina.

Nordstrom picks up a small control box from a glass stand near him and manipulates some of the dials. There is a strange hum in the air, and all eyes turn to the metallic cylinder above them. Slowly, it begins to descend, telescoping into the floor, and a monstrous form is unveiled as the metallic sheath is lowered . . . the form of an eight-foot-tall mechanical man . . . with pincer-like claws at the ends of his massive arms, bulky metal boots at the ends of his long hinged legs . . . the form of Tobor!

"This, gentlemen, is Tobor . . . A little childish joke on my part . . . robot spelled backwards. Actually, Tobor is much more than a robot. He is an electronic simulacron of a man, and just recently Carl and I have managed to install in him certain ESP abilities."

The professor then demonstrates how the huge robot can sense kindness and love in an individual, and how he can detect hatred or danger directed toward him and defend himself in a crisis. The audience is amazed by Nordstrom's automaton, and Nordstrom announces that he will be turning his creation over to the federal government for use in the space program as soon as it is perfected. With that, the demonstration comes to an end and the guests (and spy) depart.

That night, Gadge slips down into the lab and finds the control box on the work table. Unable to restrain his curiosity, he plays with the dials and manages to lower Tobor's protective cocoon and activates the metallic giant. However, Gadge never figured out what to do once the thing was activated, and he can only stand and gape as the robot stomps upstairs to the living room and starts taking the place apart, knocking over tables



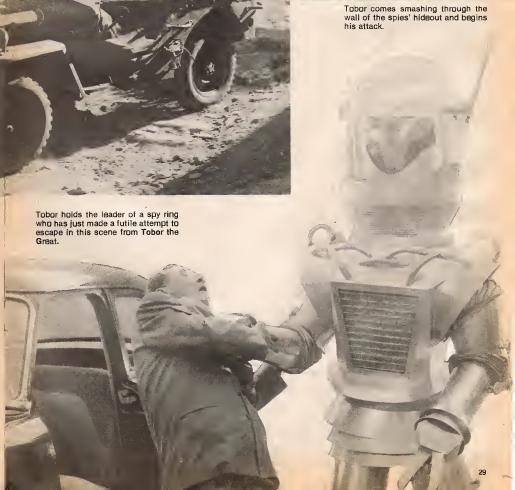
Tobor drives toward the spies' hideout to rescue the professor and the little boy.

and chairs, walking through doors, and just generally wreaking havoc. By a stroke of fortune, Gadge finally manages to figure out how to work the controls and, with a sigh of relief, he sends the remapping giant back downstairs to the lab, deactivates him, and puts him back in his tube for the night. The audience must imagine the spanking the little brat received when his mother came home to find the living room at the wrong end of the house.

In the days that follow, Nordstrom puts Tobor through a series of stress tests. Carl develops a tiny transmitter device concealed in a lead pencil, which Professor Nordstrom keeps in his pocket at all times. Gadge visits the lab more frequently and befriends the hulking creature, developing a sort of mental link with the robot, as well



Tobor comes smashing through the wall of the spies' hideout and begins his attack.



Tobor holds the leader of a spy ring who has just made a futile attempt to escape in this scene from Tobor the Great.

as a strong mutual affection.

Several nights later, well past the witching hour, a telephone repair truck pulls up outside the electrified fence around the Nordstrom estate, and three burly thugs climb over the barrier via a folding ladder. Their plan: to sneak into the lab while the Prof. is asleep, and analyze his creation, so that their Russian masters can build one just like it . . . or two, or three.

The entire family is awakened by the Professor's burglar alarms planted all over the property, and when the band of badasses approaches the house, Nordstrom activates a barrage of floodlights which bathes the crouching spies in artificial sunlight, and a tape recording of machine gun fire blasted through external speakers to send them scurrying back toward their truck. Before Dr. Harrison can get off a shot at them, the thugs escape into the night.

A run-down gas station on a lonely country road about three miles from the Nordstrom estate is being used as a hideout for the spy ring. Here they pose as car repairmen by day, and hatch their fiendish plots by night. Having failed to burglarize the doctor's lab, the Reds now plot a double kidnapping . . . the Prof and Gadge!

The next day, Gadge receives an invitation to a free planetary exhibit at the Griffith Park Planetarium, with two tickets enclosed. Of course, it's a trap set by the Reds, and upon entering the deserted building, Gadge and his grandfather are taken away to the old garage hideout at gunpoint, where Gadge is held hostage to force the old Professor to give them the secret of building a Tobor.

Meanwhile, back at the estate, a group of army officials are impatiently awaiting the arrival of the Professor so they can commence with the demonstration that he promised them. But unbeknownst to them, the Professor and his grandson are being held prisoner just a few miles away, undergoing all sorts of physical torture and mental anguish.

When the thugs threaten to sear Gadge's back with a blowtorch, the Professor submits. He is handed a piece of paper on which to inscribe the much sought after formula, and as he writes, he activates the tiny transmitting device in his lead pencil,

awakening the robot in his basement and summoning him to rescue them.

Just as the army officials are about to leave, the giant robot crashes through the wall of the library, pushes his way out of the living room door and stomps off down the block. Dr. Harrison and Carl suspect the robot is being directed by Nordstrom and they instruct the army officials to give Tobor free rein. The group follows the lumbering titan from a safe distance.

Tobor smashes his way through the Professor's electrified fence, knocks out a sentry and commandeers an army jeep. Harrison and his group follow Tobor in their cars, as he drives off up into the hills, following the signals transmitted from the Professor's lead pencil.

Just when the robot is nearing the area where his friends are being held captive, the leader of the spy ring suspects something fishy about the way Nordstrom keeps playing with his pencil, and he grabs it from the old man's hands, and snaps it in two, destroying the transmitter. Tobor stops dead, the lights in his eyes go out, his arms fall limply to his sides. Harrison's group catch up with Tobor only to find him deactivated.

Meanwhile, in the garage hideout, young Gadge closes his eyes and, with all the concentration he can muster, sends out a plea for assistance from his big robot friend. "Tobor, wherever you are . . . help us, Tobor . . . we need you . . . Help us, Tobor."

Out in the woods, to everyone's surprise, the lifeless juggernaut stirs. His neon-tube eyes glow with renewed life. His antennae twitch, his massive feet tread on. The boy's prayer has been heard. Tobor is on his way!

Moments later, the robot locates the hideout, and just as Gadge is about to get hurt, the big barn doors come crashing inward, and the Man of Steel (no, not that Man of Steel) comes plodding through the hole in the wall. It's every man for himself, as the spies forget about their hostages, and make a run for it, scattering in every direction. Tobor grabs the strongest of the bunch, and trounces him around the room with his big metal fists, while Dr. Harrison tackles another thug trying to sneak out the back way. In the chaos and con-

fusion, the head spy makes it outside to his car and starts driving away.

Suddenly his eyes widen in terror, his jaw hangs slack. The huge mechanical man is walking straight toward his car, blocking the driveway with his massive bulk. The car strikes the thing, but it doesn't budge an inch. Tobor remains in front of the car, as steady as a mighty oak, while the terrified spy steps down on the accelerator all the way to the floor, to no avail. Then the hood of the car is wrenched up into the air, his spark plugs are torn out and thrown to the side of the road, his door is ripped from its hinges, and the steel pincers close around his arm, dragging him bodily from the car and depositing him in a quivering pile in front of a group of MPs waiting to haul him away.

The battle won, Tobor returns to the garage, picks up Gadge in his monstrous embrace, and lumbers down the road, headed for the lab, followed by Dr. Harrison and Professor Nordstrom.

The final scene of the film shows a missile blasting off and soaring into the heavens, followed by a close-up of Tobor at the controls. As the ship heads for the depths of space, a little boy and his grandfather gaze skyward and wave goodbye to a machine that had become a very special part of both their lives.

It was never explained that Tobor would be coming back to Earth at some later date, although most viewers probably took it for granted. Actually, the film was all set up for a sequel. But there never was one. Looking back on it now, one wonders how the Republic Pictures executives were ever able to restrain themselves from doing a *Return of Tobor* or *Son of Tobor*, or *Billy the Kid Meets Tobor*. The possibilities were endless, and yet they never followed it up. For all we know, Tobor might still be out there, winging his way around the Moon.

As was mentioned earlier, *Tobor, The Great* will never be considered a science-fiction classic. In fact, some sci-fi buffs don't even think it was a good film. But one thing's for sure . . . it would've made a great pilot for a television series. But then it could get confusing with two Men of Steel running around on the tube. ●

**FANTASTIC
FAR-OUT
COLOR PHOTOS
Gathered from
SPACE WARS'
fabulous
sci-fi stills.**

Luke Skywalker,
Princess Leia Organa and
Han Solo are ready to do battle
with Imperial Stormtroopers



Chewbacca
the Wookiee
is ready for
action in this
scene from Star Wars.



Ben Kenobi (Alec Guinness) presents Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill) with the weapon used by the Jedi Knights, a light sabre.



Han and Princess Leia make a quick getaway to their ship in this exciting scene from Star Wars.



The now famous droids of Star Wars,
Artoo-Detoo and See-Threepio.



Lord Darth Vader leads the Imperial
Stormtroopers in a search for the
"rebel traitor."



The fabulous Mother Ship making its landing at Devil's Tower, at the conclusion of Close Encounters of the Third Kind.



Commander Koenig and Maya flee for their lives in the episode of Space: 1999 entitled "The Metamorph."

Gatherine Schell plays a sexy space siren, trying to entice Martin Landau in this episode of *Space: 1999*, "The Guardian of Piri."

▼ Gatherine Schell as Maya in *Space: 1999*.



Valerie Leon, who was last seen as an 007 beauty in **The Spy Who Loved Me**, played a gorgeous alien in the **Space: 1999** episode, "Death of the Dominion."



Stacy Dicking as Zora, a demented super-powered alien in the *Space: 1999* episode, "The Exiles"



Proof-positive that Maya's transformation abilities were many and varied. As Lincoln's clone once said aboard the *Enterprise*, "a charming Negress."



▲ Here's another one of those silly creatures from Japan, "Ghidrah the Three-Headed Monster."

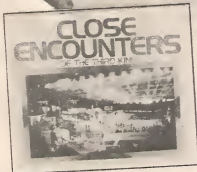
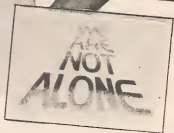


▲ Godzilla's breath is enough to knock out anybody!

▲ A rare color shot of the Venusian cucumber creature from *It Conquered the World*.

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A large group of people, including men, women, and children, are walking through a street heavily damaged by rubble and debris, likely after a bombing raid. The scene is chaotic, with large piles of rubble on the right side of the road. The people are dressed in mid-20th-century clothing, and the overall atmosphere is one of hardship and displacement.

"This Thing from Another World" was an eight-foot tall intellectual carrot that flew to Earth in a flying saucer and crashlanded in the frozen North.

■ Throughout the history, songs from other worlds have drifted to Earth for various reasons. Many of them assembled themselves (and some have been paid a lot of money in royalties) in the same old, but quite

Space: 1999 announced a number of strategic initiatives for the next part of the decade.

The article #4 is pretty good, and in the cinema. I will not be surprised to find it like **The Purple Heart Strikes** [1945], **Flying Disc Man**

The most direct influence of the 1950s was *The Young from Another World* (1957), which introduced a new kind of theater audience (the "intellectual" crowd) to a living source of information in the modern world, the television, by which all were

ducing and nearly indestructible, this clawed monster was finally stopped by electricity. Universal recently announced that it was going to remake this RKO classic.

Two different types of Martians were highlighted in *Invaders from Mars*, an excellent juvenile-oriented production of 1953. Arriving on Earth in the traditional saucer, the villains began kidnapping humans and turning them into mindless slaves. The head baddie was just that—a green head with an oversized cranium, supported by several appendages that resembled tentacles more than arms. He communicated with his subjects by telepathy and was carried around in a transparent globe. The lesser residents of the angry red planet were completely humanoid, green and difficult to kill. Nonetheless, they were all zonked by U.S. Army demolitions—just before the hero's dream ended (after which the actual invasion seemed to begin).

In 1953, an excellent idea by sf master Ray Bradbury was made into a 3-D movie and released as *It Came from Outer Space*. It was unique in that it often presented the situation from the alien's point of view, and it was sympathetic toward them. Unlike most flicks, this one contained a spaceshipful of extraterrestrials who landed on our planet by accident. Until repairs on their craft were completed, they went around passing as Earthfolk whom they had captured. Among

Ray Harryhausen's spectacular creation battles an elephant in a fantastic stop-motion animation sequence from *Twenty Million Miles of Earth*.

The death of the strange creature from Venus, the Ymir, at the conclusion of *Twenty Million Miles of Earth*.



other things, these creatures had the ability to transform themselves into any form (as could "The Thing" in John W. Campbell's original story, "Who Goes There?" which will hopefully be part of the remake). Their actual appearance was that of grotesque, amorphous, cyclopean horrors. Although several of these well-meaning strangers were slain, the remainder succeeded in blasting off for home at the conclusion.

During this same year, George Pal produced one of the all-time special-effects spectacles: *War of the Worlds*. Based on H.G. Wells' novel, this updated flick dealt with another Martian invasion of our sphere. Unlike the carnivorous, octopoidal terrors that the author had conceived, however, the movie presented stubby, faceless entities that were rather pyramid-shaped on top, with rectangular torsos and pairs of three-fingered, tentaclelike arms. Of course, the things had only one multifaceted eye apiece. They came to our planet in what appeared to be meteorites and quickly assembled indestructible fighting machines that were propelled by magnetic beams. Even hydrogen bombs were ineffective against the invaders, but local bacteria put an end to these critters at the right moment.

A race of really offbeat aliens landed here in 1955. *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* was almost exactly like Jack Finney's original novel, complete with outcast seed-pods that were actually intelligent

In this scene from *It Conquered the World*, this brave scientist does battle with a cucumber from Uranus.



Forrest Tucker is being attacked by "The Crawling Eye."



beings from Elsewhere. These interlopers had the ability to copy life forms, absorb the mentalities of their victims and then replace the originals. However, the false humans lacked emotions and productive drives; they were lazy, uncreative and destined to die out in a society where work is essential. The flick ended with the police forces

of California preparing to ferret out, and kill, the pod people. This, too, is being remade; and United Artists is scheduled to release the new version in 1978.

The first--and best--British "Quatermass" movie was issued in 1956. Brian Donlevy starred as the brilliant scientist whose mission was to find out what became of three

astronauts who went up in a rocket that encountered The Creeping Unknown. Two of the volunteers were eaten before the ship returned to Earth, and the survivor proved to be incoherent, and in great pain. In time, the remaining spaceman was completely absorbed by an essence that had entered his body, and transformed into an octopoidal being

that went around devouring any and all types of living tissue. Finally, the thing was electrocuted in Westminster Abbey just before it was about to spawn.

A more sophisticated foe nearly conquered us that same year in Earth vs. the Flying Saucers. Special-effects ace Ray Harryhausen handled the stop-motion

photography for this black-and-white epic, which contained aliens that were incredibly ancient humanoids. In order to survive, the creatures wore spacesuits that intensified their failing senses and made them resemble robots. Equipped with personal and massive ray projectors, forcefields and incredibly fast interstellar vehicles, the outworlders ended up having their magnetic propulsion units ruined by special electronic devices that the hero developed in the nick of time. A fantastic battle over Washington, D.C., decided the fate of Earth and drove these invaders away for good.

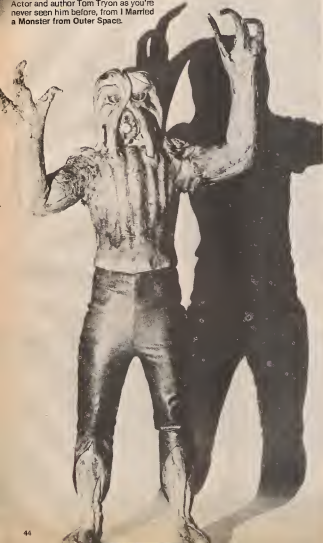
Peter Graves, James Arness's brother, challenged a triangular-shaped Venusian in *It Conquered the World* (1956). Like *Kluge*,

of *Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951), this monstrous invader was able to halt all man-made energy. As an extra added attraction, the thing manufactured flying, batlike mutations that carried mind-control instruments. When such a device was implanted at the base of a human brain, it forced the victim to obey the beast's mental commands. The scientist who had willingly aided the alien burned out one of its two eyes with a blowtorch after the inhuman creature murdered the man's wife. Before dying, the beast killed his attacker.

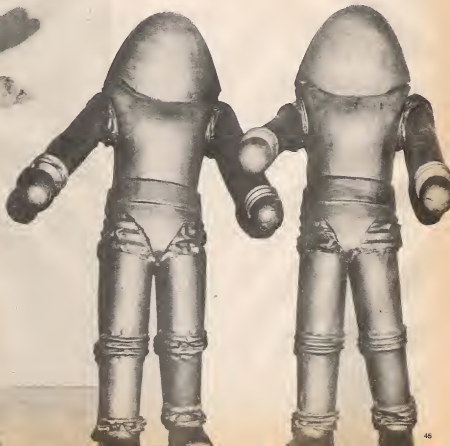
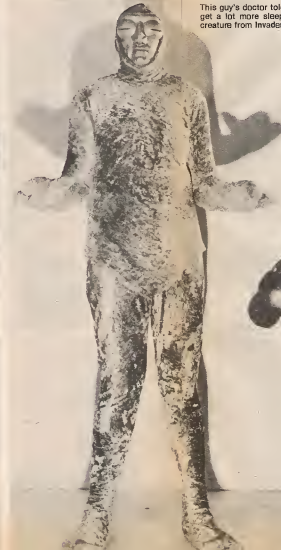
Quatermass returned to combat

Two of Ray Harryhausen's alien invaders from Earth vs. the Flying Saucers.

Actor and author Tom Tryon as you're never seen him before, from *I Married a Monster from Outer Space*.



This guy's doctor told him he should get a lot more sleep. (A zombie-like creature from *Invaders from Mars*).



the **Enemy from Space** [1957]—intelligent biots from outer space that rained down on England and turned people into obedient zombies. The little beasties either attached themselves to earthlings or became part of several enormous composite creatures that went around devouring everybody at the conclusion. Ultimately, an atomic missile destroyed the invaders' home base, which caused all of the fiends to disintegrate.

Invasion of the Saucer Men [1957] was pretty much a sci-fi spoof, with midge-size creatures menacing teenagers. Arriving on our sphere in a flying saucer, the pointy-eared, large-domed horrors spread a reign of terror that lasted all of one night. Their built-in weapons were retractable, needlelike nails that dripped with an anesthetic. Amazingly enough, each of their clawed, veiny hands came with its own eyeball; if ever one of these was severed from the body, it continued to live, crawling around and endangering the good guys. Bright light disintegrated the nasties—hands and all. This was remade as **The Eye Creatures**, one of the most miserable of flicks of all time, in 1965.

A dinosaur was transported **Twenty Million Miles to Earth**, and Harryhausen provided the spfx. Starting out as a large egg, the Ymir soon hatched and grew at an alarming rate. Within a few days, the beast was taller than a bull elephant [incidentally, it ended up slaying a pachyderm toward the conclusion]. The ugly, green lizard with the forked tail and scaly skin met its demise atop the Roman Coliseum, when tanks zeroed in on the monster.

Steve McQueen posed as a teenager in 1958 and starred in **The Blob**. Traveling to our world inside a meteorite, the fist-sized invader grew attached to a hapless farmer. After swarming all over the man—growing with the flesh it ingested—it snacked on a doctor and his nurse and then went out in search of the main course: a local movie theater, packed with kids. The red, formless gargantuan continued to grow until fire-fighting chemicals turned it into a popsicle as the thing was munching on a diner. The army dropped it over the Antarctic, but 14 years later a portion of the monster was brought back to the U.S. in a comedy called **Beware! The Blob**

and **Son of Blob**. At the finale, the shapeless one seemed to have grown immune to being frozen.

Elsewhere, **The Crawling Eye** [1958] was leading a group of telepathic horrors through the Trolenberg in search of human food. These outsized eyeballs crawled around on powerful tentacles, made noises like a sick motor and screeched when hurt. Aside from eating people, they occasionally turned men into bloodless zombies, who often complained about the temperature. Molotov cocktails and napalm rockets put an end to this nasty intergalactic threat.

Despite its silly title, **I Married a Monster from Outer Space** [1958] was a minor classic. The aliens herein came to Terra because their own planet was dying, and by this time their females had all expired. One saucerful of the humanoid, large-domed creatures landed here and proceeded to substitute themselves for the local folks [males only, of course]. Several of them married our women, but propagation was not yet possible. Months later, a posse of men and dogs tracked down the spacecraft and wiped out the unfriendly newcomers. The orbiting space fleet then departed in search of a more hospitable place.

The following year, an **Atomic Submarine** fought against a living flying saucer under the frozen North. Inside the sentient ship was a repulsive-looking, radioactive, one-eyed nightmare that delighted in melting people. Both creatures possessed the ability to heal themselves, but a Polaris missile blasted the duo into irreparable shards. ("All the King's horses, and all the King's men. . .")

In 1962, theater audiences found **The Three Stooges in Orbit** [they had filmed **Have Rocket, Will Travel** in 1959, and several other fantasies along the way]. This time the slapstick trio became involved with a flaky scientist who was attempting to perfect a vehicle that was a combination plane, tank and submarine [and looked it, too]. As it turned out, the Martian Council was interested in this invention, and they sent two agents to steal the full-sized prototype. Looking like cheap versions of the Frankenstein Monster, Ogg and Zogg were finally defeated by the Stooges, and

the idiots ended up on the angry red planet. Incidentally, this was also known as **The Three Stooges Meet the Martians**.

A full-grown, man-sized, fishlike terror sprang from an extraterrestrial egg in **Destination Inner Space** [1966]. Determined to conquer Earth, its plans were thwarted by the crew of a U.S. atomic submarine, which succeeded in blowing up the beast, its egg companions and the flying saucer that brought them here.

The giant prehistoric turtle, Gamera, fought against several alien races throughout his Japanese film career, but his most intriguing foes appeared in **Destroying All Planets** [1968]. Assuming human form, the invaders captured two boys and temporarily gained control over the fanged dinosaur. When their plans backfired, though, they merged into an enormous flying starfish-type. Naturally, Gamera saved our world and pummeled the gargantuan foreigner.

The final Quatermass flick was entitled **Five Million Years to Earth** [1968], and it revealed how a subway excavation team uncovered an ancient spaceship from the fourth planet. Inside it were perfectly preserved insectoids, several feet in length, which strongly resembled grasshoppers. The still-functional Martian craft exerted a strong hypnotic influence over anyone with latent extrasensory abilities, and research indicated that the creatures had mutated our prehistoric ancestors, thereby bringing about pompous **Homo sapiens**. Finally, the vehicle's incredible power was unleashed, but a towering crane was maneuvered to ground the deadly energy and short-circuit the rocket.

In recent years, intergalactic visitors have become more realistic-looking. For the most part, they now tend to resemble the creatures described by real-life eyewitnesses [?]. In **The UFO Incident** [1975], **End of the World** [1977], **Starship Invasions** [1977] and **Close Encounters of the Third Kind** [1977], many of the aliens are humanoid, pale-skinned, and have oversized bald heads with small eyes, and holes in place of ears. While this might very well be accurate, I tend to miss the good old days. **Star Wars** [1977] gave us

(Continued on page 68)

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a Japanese villain in his early days, but he soon saw the light and joined the ranks of dinosaurs who now defend our world from assorted nasties. Gamera creators, Daiei in Japan, have gone out of business, so he is presently in retirement. I, for one, am very happy about this, because the productions were so juvenile that they were incredibly offensive. Only the introductory movie, **Gamera the Invincible**

[1966], has any merit whatsoever as an entertaining effort. Even so, it concluded with the fanged turtle being lured aboard a spaceship and shot into the wild blue yonder. Ales, the thing returned, and the series immediately went downhill.

The first time that Godzilla challenged other worldly killers was in **Monster Zero** (1965), which had some good special effects, and a fairly decent storyline—for a Japan-



Godzilla and company wave a fond farewell to their many loyal fans at the conclusion of **Godzilla vs. Megalon**.

Which will prove to be more powerful, the spaceship's deadly ray or Gamera's bad breath? See **Destroy All Monsters** to find out.

GIANT MONSTERS

When Godzilla stomped his way into motion pictures a number of years ago, he was a horrible bad guy, but as of late he has become a mighty hero, always on hand to save Japan or the whole world from total destruction.

For some reason or other, Godzilla is extremely popular among children throughout the world. Toho, the monster's production company in Japan, continues to churn out movies starring the big green lizard, and most of these get released in the States sooner or later. When Godzilla began his film career, he

was a murderous horror, but nowadays he only goes after humans if he is being controlled by beings from another world. Currently he is a hero and he has saved mankind on a number of occasions.

This article deals with the times that Godzilla opposed alien invaders. He has done this on five occasions,

VS.

saving Earth from oppression and destruction in each instance. Following the section on the Big G is a portion devoted to Gamera, who seems to be related to the aforementioned protector.

Gamera is a giant, prehistoric turtle that can fly, and is nearly indestructible. Like Godzilla, he was

ALIEN INVADERS



ese flick, that is. This sequel to **Ghidrah, the Three-Headed Monster** (also 1965) starred American actor Nick Adams as a spaceman who traveled to Planet X, along with an Oriental companion. There, they encountered a race of humanoid aliens who were reminiscent of the invaders in **The Mysterians** (1957). These cordial characters explained that Ghidrah, the infamous winged space dragon (whom they had dubbed "Monster Zero"), was attacking their sphere. Their weapons were useless against the ray-spewing beast, and they were desperate to save their world. They asked — now get this — to **borrow** none other than Godzilla and Rodan in order to eliminate the awesome threat, and in return they offered a serum that would wipe out all

Earthly diseases. Despite severe protests from the American Medical Association and similar organizations, the authorities finally agreed to the trade. Speeding to Earth in neat-looking flying saucers, the X-ites used their superior science to locate their targets. Immobilizing the sleeping beauties and enveloping them in glowing bubbles, they transported their cargo into outer space. After the pair beat off the un-domed terror, the treacherous aliens hypnotized them and ordered all three bigges to wreck havoc on our world. Paradoxically, a female invader fell in love with one of the heroes and turned the tables on her race. She broke the hold that her people had on the green lizard and his flying friend, and enabled them to regain what little sense they had.



◀ Godzilla is being controlled by aliens, and he is creating havoc in the city. (From *Destroy All Monsters*)



▲ Gamera gives this giant alien squid a tremendous hotfoot in *Destroy All Planets*.

▲ Gamera hams it up with Virus (that's the monster's name, folks) in this scene from *Destroy All Planets*.

Gamera and friends are being pursued by an alien spacecraft in this scene from *Attack of the Monsters*. ▼



Then, as local armed forces used soundwaves to upset the X-Iles, Godzilla and Rodan succeeded in defeating Ghidrah and sending him back into space with his tail between his legs. The aliens were soon vanquished, and all was well again.

Three years later, the trio of giants turned up again in the slugfest of all time, **Destroy All Monsters**. This production contained nearly every monster that Toho had ever filmed, including many that had been completely destroyed in previous efforts. Even Godzilla's son did his cute thing at the finale, blowing

smoke rings because he wasn't old enough to light up like his father. The setting herein was in the near future, when space travel was fairly common. By this time, the multitude of dinosaurs still existing on Earth had settled down on what became known as Monster Island (how quaint). Here, scientists from all

Gamera and Giron are about to have a fight to the finish, and these two excited Japanese citizens (in lower right-hand corner) are running to tell their people to prepare for their weekly monster invasion. ▼

over the world studied them — at a safe distance, of course. One day, though, invaders from the planet Kilaak assumed human form and used a nerve gas to knock out the eggheads on the isle. They lost no time in gaining mental control of the powerful anachronisms, and they commanded the gargantuans to destroy the major cities of our sphere. The formidable slaves obeyed, and within a short time their target areas lay in ruins. New York

No, that's not a baby's rattle chasing Gamera, it's an alien spaceship. ▼



◀Hail, hail, the gang's all here. (From **Destroy All Monsters**)

fell under the onslaught of Godzilla, Rodan zoned Moscow, Manda terrorized London, and Mothra blew away Peking. Other horrors plagued different urban communities, and mankind's armies used everything short of tactical nuclear weapons against the unstoppable destroyers. Once again, humanity — particularly Tokyo, for obvious reasons — seemed doomed. Fortunately (ahel!), the ray that was controlling the monsters was discovered to be originating from the moon. A well-armed team of scientists and soldiers quickly rocketed to our natural satellite and besieged the alien base that they found there. The mind control transmitter was subsequently captured and brought to Earth. Soon afterward, the dinosaurs turned against their former

masters and obliterated their subterranean base. In a last-ditch effort, an incredibly hot flying saucer — fanning, actually — soared to do battle with the allied forces; it, too, was eliminated. Finally, the invaders summoned Ghidrah to combat their enemies. In the spectacular, drawn-out bout that followed, the psychotic space dragon and his inhuman friends were bested.

In 1972, **Godzilla vs. Gigan** was released; thus far, this has not come to America, but it is due to emerge soon as **Godzilla on Monster Island**, via CineMa Shares.

brought it to Children's Land. In actuality, undesirable from "Space M" (?) had come to Earth and taken over some human bodies in order to pave the way for their hackneyed invasion. Like so many others before them, they planned to use this planet's giants against our civilization, but, as we all know, history repeats itself. When Godzilla and his partner showed up in the

Godzilla's idea of a quiet Sunday gathering does not fare well with the people of Japan. This scene is from **Godzilla vs. Bionic Monster**. ▼

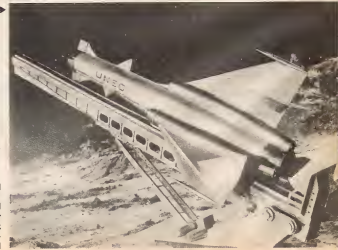
vicinity of the villains, the latter called forth Ghidrah and a pudgy pal, Gigen, from the distant Hunter Nebula. Somehow flying to Earth in no time at all, the anti-socials picked a fight with the Big G and Anguruss. The baddies were helped along by an "anti-monster laser" that hindered our heroes. Nonetheless, the alien controllers were ultimately slain, and their outsized clients were bested off by the green lizard with the bad breath.

The next assault came from within our planet. Enraged by our underground atomic tasting, which



This spaceship is preparing to fight ▶ against alien invaders in a scene from **Destroy All Monsters**.

Anyway, this began when the hero happened to find some recording tape that had been dropped at Children's Land, a lavish playground in Tokyo. He also happened to team up with a woman who informed him that her brother, a computer technician, was being held prisoner at the amusement park. When they played part of the reel, they realized that it bore some high-frequency soundwaves which had been designed to stimulate the brainwaves of you-know-what. As a result, both Godzilla and a quadruped, called Anguruss (introduced in **Gigantis, the Fire Monster** (1959) — old monsters never die!) left Monster Island and headed for Japan. Not much later, some suspicious characters stole the special tape and





▲ In this "exciting" scene from *Destroy All Monsters* this spaceship is about to land on the moon.

▼ Godzilla's son (second from right) looks like he's about ready to break into a song and turn this fearsome foursome into a barbershop quartet in this scene from *Destroy All Monsters*.

☛ was badly affecting their society, the subterranean civilization of Mu decided to teach us surface-dwellers a stern lesson. They awoke a giant insectoid that was capable of flying and firing highly destructive rays, and set the scene for *Godzilla vs. Megalon* [1973]. In addition, the

bad guys sent agents out and captured the controls of a flying android known as "Jet Jaguar." They employed this colorful invention to guide their bad-tempered enforcer to inhabited areas of Japan, but this technique did not last long. For-

(Continued on page 65)





THINGS TO COME

One of the greatest science-fiction films of all time came about because a motion-picture producer wanted to take a chance on bringing the work of H.G. Wells to the screen. *Things to Come* was a story of our world torn apart by a devastating war, and the hope of starting civilization all over again.

Things to Come was amazingly accurate in predicting many future events. Wells, for example, gave an excellent description of the "blitz" on London several years before it began.

By Allan Asherman

■ Science fiction, if properly understood, can be the source of beautiful stories and motion pictures. With science fiction, history can be extended into the future to produce a constant "time-line" showing [1] what was; [2] what exists today; and [3] what may be in existence tomorrow. If man's scientific progress is combined with what is known [or unknown] about the universe around him, great adventures take form. Films like *Forbidden Planet* (MGM; 1956) and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (Columbia; 1977) are good examples of quality films created using science fiction as a focal point to say, "what if . . ." or "suppose somewhere out there . . ."

One of the greatest science-fiction films ever made came about

because a gifted movie producer in Britain, Alexander Korda, wanted to take a chance in bringing the writings of H.G. Wells to the screen. Wells, intrigued with the art form of motion pictures, had written a film script once before, but no one had ever filmed it [called *The King Who Was a King*, it would have been too expensive, and too unpopular; it was an anti-war film]. In 1933, Wells wrote his book *The Shape of Things to Come*, which Korda decided to turn into a movie spectacle. By the time Wells had learned what **could** and **could not** be afforded in films, his script bore little resemblance to his book.

The film *Things to Come* (United Artists; 1936) was a story of our world torn apart by war and of various kinds of people who set out either to ignore or prolong the war, or rebuild the world. In the beginning we meet John Cabal;

through his eyes we see the horrors of war, the destruction of families and cities and the hope of starting civilization all over again, with science as the main power instead of politics.

Young Dr. Harding is worried about what will happen to medicine if war should come. Cabal's friend Passworthy is not worried at all; he thinks war will bring more sci-

Unseen enemy aircraft bomb the city of "Everytown" (a copy of London created with studio sets, miniatures and matte paintings), destroying buildings and people with shrapnel and poison gas. In the rubble we see Passworthy's young son lying dead.

The next portion of the film is a montage, showing the horrors of war. Huge squadrons of planes fly

Cast	
John Cabal, Oswald Cabal	Raymond Massey
Passworthy, Raymond Passworthy	Edward Chapman
Rudolph (The Boss)	Sir Ralph Richardson
Roxana Black, Roxana Cabal	Margaretta Scott
Theoctopus	Sir Cedric Hardwicke
Dr. Harding	Maurice Braddell
Mrs. John Cabal	Sophie Stewart
Richard Gordon	Derek DeMarney
Mary (Harding) Gordon	Ann Todd
Catherine Cabal	Pearl Argyle
Maurice Passworthy	Kenneth Villiers
Morden Mitani	Ivan Brandt
The Child	Anne McLaren
The Almiran	John Clements
Simon Burton	Anthony Mallet
Grandfather Cabal	Alan Jayes
Home Passworthy	Pickles Livingston
Janet Gordon	Patricia Hilliard
Wadeky	Abraham Sofaer

Credits	
Screenplay by	H.G. Wells
Produced by	Sir Alexander Korda
Directed by	William Cameron Menzies
Photography by	Georges Perinot
Settings Designed by	Vincent Korda, Moholy Nagy
Special Effects Directed by	Ned Mann
Special Effects Photographer	Edward Cohen
Assistant to Special Effects	Lawrence Butler
Special Effects Technician	Harry Zech
Music by	Sir Arthur Bliss
Musical Director	Muir Matheson
Production Manager	David B. Cunyngname
Edited by	William Hornbeck
Astronomical Advice	Nigel Tengey
Costumes designed by	John Armstrong, Rene Hubert
Assistant Art Director	Frank Wells
Recording Engineer	A.W. Watkins
Running time: 13 minutes	
Re-released in America in 1947 (Film Classics) and 1965 (Comet Films).	

entific progress and increase the "team spirit" in his country. These three personalities, interacting, form one complete picture of the film's events (just as Kirk, Spock and McCoy combine to form one "personality" on *Star Trek*).

The Christmas spirit of the film's opening vanishes as the war begins.

over landscapes, continuing to drop poison gas. Throughout it all, John Cabal sums up H.G. Wells' thoughts on war with such comments as "Why surrender life to the brutes and fools?" and (speaking to a dying enemy soldier) "Why do we have to murder each other?" We see tanks change into futuristic-looking



World President Cabal (Raymond Massey), stands near his assistant. Note the small TV set on the desk.

machines; the only progress here is in making more efficient weapons.

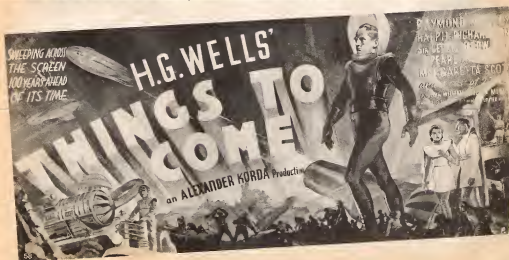
The weapons take their toll on the world. Civilization comes to a dead end, with people living in bombed-out ruins of houses and unused subway and sewage tunnels. These unsanitary conditions, plus the absence of proper medical facilities, create a worldwide plague called "the Wandering Sickness." Fearish victims leave their deathbeds to spread the sickness as people run in terror from the wandering carriers of the disease. One heartless individual suggests forming groups of gunmen to shoot down the sick wanderers. Dr. Harding, aged by the terrible conditions of the world, tries to save everyone he can, but it's useless. One by one the wanderers are shot. Among the last victims is Janet Gordon, young sister of Richard Gordon. "There's nothing to make anyone comfortable anymore," Dr. Harding comments.

After the Wandering Sickness has come to an end, we see Everytown ruled by Rudolph (who modestly calls himself "The Boss"), the same man who directed the killing of the wanderers: years before. The Boss is still making war on his hill-people neighbors. Richard Gordon has married Dr. Harding's daughter, Mary. The Boss has moved in with Roxana Black, an ambitious and intelligent young woman. One day the routine of Everytown is interrupted by the arrival of an airplane. It is a machine like nothing ever seen before, beautiful, streamlined and piloted by a middle-aged man wearing a flight suit and a huge gas-mask helmet. The pilot is John Cabal.

Cabal belongs to an organization of scientists and engineers called "Wings Over the World." The Boss immediately declares war on this bunch of "aerial bus drivers" and has Cabal jailed.

With the aid of Gordon, who is trying to restore The Boss's "air force" (a group of 19 decaying planes), Cabal is released and aids in the repairs. Gordon escapes in one plane and flies to Basra, the

Author H.G. Wells visits actors Pearl Argyle and Raymond Massey on the set of *Things to Come* in 1935.



◀ Ernest Theisger, who was not in the final film, is shown in a special-effects test shot.

headquarters of Wings Over the World. Here we see huge hangars and factories and gigantic aircraft.

Using Gordon's directions, the air-men prepare to invade Everytown and bombard the city with the anaesthetic "gas of peace."

The air raid is successful. Just as The Boss sees the clouds of gas drifting toward him, he tries to

shoot Dr. Harding and Mary Gordon, but is prevented from killing them. Roxana Black has saved their lives. Roxana: the symbol of the future women, who will work together with men to build a new world.



◀ Original 1936 poster art for *Things to Come*.

▲ The Future City: the people are real, everything else is a miniature.

The only casualty is The Boss. He fought the gas too hard and died. "Dead, and his world dead with him," comments Cabel, "...and a

new world yet to come."

In a beautiful series of montages, we see gigantic digging machines blasting excavations for the Everytown of tomorrow. Enormous machines manufacture parts of huge buildings. An entire wall of an apartment complex is completed and taken outside to be positioned onto the half-completed construction. The new city of the future is a beautiful one, filled with incredible structures that rise like chemical crystals into the air. Balconies, trees and overhead transportation systems are glimpsed overlooking large parks and roadways that move beneath people and carry them to all parts of the city. The new Everytown is a tribute to science, progress and the spirit of man at peace.

But one man isn't at peace; an artist, Theotocopolus, is unhappy with all this progress, especially the "space gun," a giant cannon which will launch a manned rocket to the moon. The new government, headed by Oswald Cabal (John's grandson), is against Theotocopolus but is even more against censorship. Theotocopolus is permitted to speak, his face and words carried on television screens both huge and small.

The two astronauts picked to journey to the moon are President Cabal's daughter and Maurice Passworthy (a descendant of the original Passworthy). As a crowd of Theotocopolus's followers heads for the space gun to destroy it, the astronauts and their parents fly to the huge cannon in a helicopter, and the children enter the pressurized interior of their moon rocket.

The gun is huge; the demonstrations cannot hope to smash it. As it is being prepared to fire, Cabal warns the crowd through a loud-speaker system to stay back; the concussion of the blastoff will kill them! But people ignore his warning. As they scamper up ladders, across bridges and roadways leading to the gun, the explosion and smoke of the blastoff covers the scene.

We next see Cabal and Raymond Passworthy before a large telescope-monitor. They discuss the nature of man and of scientific exploration. Cabal describes man as having a chance to either master the universe or achieve nothing. As he wonders "which shall it be," the film ends.

Things to Come is amazingly accurate in many of its predictions.

Wells gives an excellent description of the "blitz" on London, several years before it began. It is said that reporters, viewing the film in 1936, laughed at the scenes of planes bombing the huge city near the white cliffs; this could never happen, they argued, and apparently regarded the film as more of a fantasy than as a scientific projection of the future. The Fascist countries did not. **Things to Come** was banned in Germany (and probably Italy as well; The Boss resembled dictator Mussolini in his appearance and behavior).

In his prediction of the flight to the moon, Wells was incredibly right and incredibly inaccurate at the same time. Although the Navy has experimented with cannons to launch rockets, the "space gun" will probably never be built. In the film, however, the rocket itself is described by a great-grandfather to his little great-granddaughter:

"It's a lot of guns, one inside the other. Each one discharges the next inside. . . . The cylinder it shoots out at last, goes so fast that it goes—swish—right away from the earth."

The description here is of a multi-stage rocket, building up enough speed in its first stages so that the last stage achieves escape velocity and leaves Earth's gravity.

Another portion of dialogue, unfortunately trimmed from the film, continues:

"They shoot the cylinder so that it travels around the other side of the moon and comes back, and there's a safe place in the Pacific Ocean where it drops. They get more and more accurate. They say they can tell within 20 miles where it will come back and they keep the sea clear for it."

Wells not only predicted the method that would be used to escape Earth's gravity, but also mapped out the course of the first actual manned rocket flight to the moon (it orbited, but did not land). Not content to stop there, he also predicted the first nation to land on the moon would recover its space travelers at sea, not on dry land.

In the future sequences, President Cabal wears a wrist transmitter and has a small television receiver on his desk. Although some of the TV images were matted into the film, some were double-exposed, suggesting three-dimensional, transparent holograms. Artificially developed breeds of dogs and plants

were planned, but dropped in final production stages.

Other predictions in the film may be coincidences, but are still strangely accurate. When a caption announces we are seeing "1945" a mushroom-like explosion can be seen rising in front of the smoking date. Later, during the scenes showing the reconstruction of Everytown, a series of square patterns cross the screen; they appear to integrate with each other, forming overlapping patterns. Numbers flash on and off on screens in front of this effect, suggesting the use of digital computers and electronic readouts years before these concepts became realities.

In the film's original script, Oswald Cabal's former wife Rowena (they were divorced) argued against their daughter's life being endangered on a journey to the moon. Cabal's reply was: "There's no sex in that sort of adventure. It is as open to you as it is to us. Drop the old sex romance. Come and work with us."

The dialogue is much longer, but the intent is clear. Wells was predicting that the roles of women in society would change, that they would eventually become so "liberated" that they would work with men as equals in the world. The reasons for this sequence being eliminated from the finished film are unknown. One theory suggests the scene was snipped during a reissue of the film, at a time when divorces were not accepted by society. (This is a likely explanation, and would account for the fact that actress Margaretta Scott, who played both Roxana Black and Rowena, is billed under both character names in surviving prints of the film.)

The special photographic effects in **Things to Come** range from the terrible to the great. One miniature airplane crash is embarrassing to watch, and some of the film's split-screen effects are out of alignment. The vast majority of effects were accomplished using incredibly complex miniatures. The futuristic Everytown was filmed partially using actual-size construction, topped with buildings that were actually "hanging miniatures": detailed models suspended in front of the camera lens. The Everytown of the past consisted of full-scale lower portions of buildings, with optical paintings completing the picture. The same technique was used to

show the huge aircraft awaiting takeoff at Beera.

The miniature aircraft of the film are all well designed and constructed. The batlike bombers and Cabal's one-man plane contrast with each other but are clearly part of the same advanced technology. The helicopter (or autogyro) at the film's climax is patterned after an existing prototype that is on display in the Aerospace Museum in Washington, D.C. The space gun is convincing in size and bulk [the actual miniature was over seven feet tall]. At times hordes of people were shown running through the miniature city, or surrounding the space gun. These were actually groups of small and minutely detailed figures positioned on conveyor belts that sped the miniature people across the model landscapes at varying speeds.

Most people expect *Things to Come* to be completely about the streamlined and art-deco future. Some viewers are disappointed when they find that only the last portion of the movie is "futuristic." Still others are critical of William Cameron Menzies' direction of the film. This is to be expected; Menzies was a genius, and works of genius are received with varying opinions. (Menzies later designed the entire film *Gone with the Wind* for producer David O. Selznick in 1939.)

The best barometer of *Things to Come*'s success seems to be H.G. Wells. The author's notes (included in the 1975 edition of the film's preliminary script, published by Gregg Press as one of their limited-edition Science-Fiction Series of hard-backed books) indicate that Wells was very happy with the way the project turned out. Throughout production he worked closely on such things as the film's wardrobe and background music.

The music for *Things to Come* was composed by Sir Arthur Bliss (who later became Queen Elizabeth's official composer of state marches). The score became the very first to be recorded for commercial sale (as a series of 78 discs from Decca Records), and has since been recorded many times (two records containing music from the film were issued in 1977).

Things to Come marked Raymond Messey's first significant starring role [he later became famous portraying Abraham Lincoln in the 1940 RKO film *Abe Lincoln*

in Illinois, and is also remembered as Dr. Gillespie in the MGM *Dr. Kildare* TV series]. The role of Theotocopolus was originally supposed to have been played by Ernest Thesiger, who was Dr. Pretorius in *The Bride of Frankenstein* (Universal; 1935). That role probably prevented him from appearing in *Things to Come*. A short role [Wadsky, the merchant] in *Things to Come* was played by noted character actor Abraham Sofaer. Years later Sofaer appeared in the *Twilight Zone* TV episode "The Mighty Casey," in an episode of *The Night-stalker* TV series and in two *Star Trek* segments [he was the Thasian in "Charlie X," and the voice of the Mekot warning buoy in "Spectre of the Gun"].

Things to Come had its American premiere at the Rivoli Theatre in New York City as costumed airmen paraded in front of the theatre. Its original doublebill was with *The Man Who Could Work Miracles* (United Artists; 1936), another Korda production with an H.G. Wells screenplay. ●

THE GARDEN OF TIME

(Continued from page 14)

the core at last released. Gradually the crystal dissolved, only the outer petals remaining intact, and the air around Axel became bright and vivid, charged with slanting rays that flared away into the waning sunlight. Strange shifts momentarily transformed the evening, subtly altering its dimensions of time and space. The darkened portico of the house, its patina of age stripped away, loomed with a curious spectral whiteness as if suddenly remembered in a dream.

Raising his head, Axel peered over the wall again. Only the farthest rim of the horizon was lit by the sun, and the great throng, which before had stretched almost a quarter of the way across the plain, had now receded to the horizon, the entire concourse abruptly flung back in a reversal of time, and appeared to be stationary.

The flower in Axel's hand had shrunk to the size of a glass thimble, the petals contracting around the vanishing core. A faint sparkle flickered from the center and extinguished itself, and Axel felt the flower melt like ice-cold beads of dew in his hand.

Dusk closed across the house,

sweeping its long shadows over the plain, the horizon merging into the sky. The harpsichord was silent, and the time flowers, no longer reflecting its music, stood motionlessly, like an embalmed forest.

For a few minutes Axel looked down at them counting the flowers which remained, then greeted his wife as she crossed the terrace, her brocade evening dress rustling over the ornamental tiles.

"What a beautiful evening, Axel." She spoke feelingly, as if she were thanking her husband personally for the great ornate shadow across the lawn and the dark brilliant air. Her face was serene and intelligent, her hair, swept back behind her head into a jeweled clasp, touched with silver. She wore her dress low across her breast, revealing a long slender neck and high chin. Axel surveyed her with fond pride. He gave her his arm and together they walked down the steps into the garden.

"One of the longest evenings this summer," Axel confirmed, adding, "I picked a perfect flower, my dear, a jewel. With luck it should last us for several days." A frown touched his brow, and he glanced involuntarily at the wall. "Each time now they seem to come nearer."

His wife smiled at him encouragingly and held his arm more tightly.

Both of them knew that the time garden was dying.

Three evenings later, as he had estimated (though sooner than he secretly hoped), Count Axel plucked another flower from the time garden.

When he first looked over the wall the approaching rabble filled the distant half of the plain, stretching across the horizon in an unbroken mass. He thought he could hear the low, fragmentary sounds of voices carried across the empty air, a sullen murmur punctuated by cries and shouts, but quickly told himself that he had imagined them. Luckily, his wife was at the harpsichord, and the rich contrapuntal patterns of a Bach fugue cascaded lightly across the terrace, masking any other noises.

Between the house and the horizon the plain was divided into four huge swells, the crest of each one clearly visible in the slanting light. Axel had promised himself that he would never count them, but the number was too small to remain unobserved, particularly when it so obviously marked the progress of

the advancing army. By now the forward line had passed the first crest and was well on its way to the second; the main bulk of the throng pressed behind it, hiding the crest and the even vaster concourse spreading from the horizon. Looking to left and right of the central body, Axel could see the apparently limitless extent of the army. What had seemed at first to be the central mass was no more than a minor advance guard, one of many similar arms reaching across the plain. The true center had not yet emerged, but from the rate of extension Axel estimated that when it finally reached the plain it would completely cover every foot of ground.

Axel searched for any large vehicles or machines, but all was amorphous and uncoordinated as ever. There were no banners or flags, no mascots or pike bearers. Heads bowed, the multitude pressed on, unaware of the sky.

Suddenly, just before Axel turned away, the forward edge of the throng appeared on top of the second crest, and swarmed down across the plain. What astounded Axel was the incredible distance it had covered while out of sight. The figures were now twice the size, each one clearly within sight.

Quickly, Axel stepped from the terrace, selected a time flower from the garden and tore it from the stem. As it released its compacted light, he returned to the terrace. When the flower had shrunk to a frozen pearl in his palm he looked out at the plain, with relief saw that the army had retreated to the horizon again.

Then he realized that the horizon was much nearer than previously, and that what he assumed to be the horizon was the first crest.

When he joined the Countess on their evening walk he told her nothing of this, but she could see behind his casual unconcern and did what she could to dispel his worry.

Walking down the steps, she pointed to the time garden. "What a wonderful display, Axel. There are so many flowers still."

Axel nodded, smiling to himself at his wife's attempt to reassure him. Her use of *still* had revealed her own unconscious anticipation of the end. In fact a mere dozen flowers remained of the many hundred that had grown in the garden, and several of these were

little more than buds—only three or four were fully grown. As they walked down to the lake, the Countess's dress rustling across the cool turf, he tried to decide whether to pick the larger flowers first or leave them to the end. Strictly, it would be better to give the smaller flowers additional time to grow and mature, and this advantage would be lost if he retained the larger flowers to the end, as he wished to do, for the final repulse. However, he realized that it mattered little either way; the garden would soon die and the smaller flowers required far longer than he could give them to accumulate their compressed cores of time. During his entire lifetime he had failed to notice a single evidence of growth among the flowers. The larger blooms had always been mature, and none of the buds had shown the slightest development.

Crossing the lake, he and his wife looked down at their reflections in the still black water. Shielded by the pavilion on one side and the high garden wall on the other, the villa in the distance, Axel felt composed and secure, the plain with its encroaching multitude a nightmare from which he had safely awakened. He put one arm around his wife's smooth waist and pressed her affectionately to his shoulder, realizing that he had not embraced her for several years, though their lives together had been timeless and he could remember as if yesterday when he first brought her to live in the villa.

"Axel," his wife asked with sudden seriousness, "before the garden dies... may I pick the last flower?"

Understanding her request, he nodded slowly.

One by one over the succeeding evenings, he picked the remaining flowers, leaving a single small bud which grew just below the terrace for his wife. He took the flowers at random, refusing to count or ration them, plucking two or three of the smaller buds at the same time when necessary. The approaching horde had now reached the second and third crests, a vast concourse of laboring humanity that blotted out the horizon. From the terrace Axel could see clearly the shuffling, straining ranks moving down into the hollow toward the final crest, and occasionally the sounds of their voices carried across to him, inter-

spersed with cries of anger and the cracking of whips. The wooden carts lurched from side to side on tilting wheels, their drivers struggling to control them. As far as Axel could tell, not a single member of the throng was aware of its overall direction. Rather, each one blindly moved forward across the ground directly below the heels of the person in front of him, and the only unity was that of the cumulative compass. Pointlessly, Axel hoped that the true center, far below the horizon, might be moving in a different direction, and that gradually the multitude would alter course, swing away from the villa, and recede from the plain like a turning tide.

On the last evening but one, as he plucked the time flower, the forward edge of the rabble had reached the third crest, and was swarming past it. While he waited for the Countess, Axel looked at the two flowers left, both small buds which would carry them back through only a few minutes of the next evening. The glass stems of the dead flowers reared up stiffly into the air, but the whole garden had lost its bloom.

Axel passed the next morning quietly in his library, sealing the rarer of his manuscripts into the glass-topped cases between the galleries. He walked slowly down the portrait corridor, polishing each of the pictures carefully, then tidied his desk and locked the door behind him. During the afternoon he busied himself in the drawing rooms, obtrusively assisting his wife as she cleaned their ornaments and straightened the vases and busts.

By evening, as the sun fell behind the house, they were both tired and dusty, and neither had spoken to the other all day. When his wife moved toward the music room, Axel called her back.

"Tonight we'll pick the flowers together, my dear," he said to her evenly. "One for each of us."

He peered only briefly over the wall. They could hear, less than half a mile away, the great dull roar of the ragged army, the ring of iron and lash, pressing on toward the house.

Quickly, Axel plucked his flower, a bud no bigger than a sapphire. As it flickered softly, the tumult outside momentarily receded, then began to gather again.

Shutting his ears to the clamor,

Axel looked around at the villa, counting the six columns in the portico, then gazed out across the lawn at the silver disk of the lake, its bowl reflecting the last evening light, and at the shadows moving between the tall trees, lengthening across the crisp turf. He lingered over the bridge where he and his wife had stood arm in arm for so many seasons—

"Axel!"

The tumult outside roared into the air, a thousand voices below only twenty or thirty yards away. A stone flew over the wall and landed among the time flowers, snapping several of the brittle stems. The Countess ran toward him as a further barrage rattled along the wall. Then a heavy tile whirled through the air over their heads and crashed into one of the conservatory windows.

"Axel!" He put his arms around her, straightening his silk cravat when her shoulder brushed it between his lapels.

"Quickly, my dear, the last flower!" He led her down the steps and through the garden. Taking the stern between her jeweled fingers, she snapped it cleanly, then cradled it within her palms.

For a moment the tumult lessened slightly and Axel collected himself. In the vivid light sparkling from the flower he saw his wife's white, frightened eyes. "Hold it as long as you can, my dear, until the last grain dies."

Together they stood on the terrace, the Countess clasping the brilliant dying jewel, the air closing in upon them as the voices outside mounted again. The mob was battering at the heavy iron gates, and the whole villa shook with the impact.

While the final glimmer of light sped away, the Countess raised her palms to the air, as if releasing an invisible bird, then in a final access of courage put her hands in her husband's, her smile as radiant as the vanished flower.

"Oh, Axel!" she cried.

Like a sword, the darkness swooped down across them.

Heaving and swearing, the outer edges of the mob reached the knee-high remains of the wall enclosing the ruined estate, hauled their carts over it and along the dry ruts of what once had been an ornate drive. The ruin, formerly a spacious villa, barely interrupted the cease-

less tide of humanity. The lake was empty, fallen trees rotting at its bottom, an old bridge rusting into it. Weeds flourished among the long grass in the lawn, overrunning the ornamental pathways and carved stone screens.

Much of the terrace had crumbled, and the main section of the mob cut straight across the lawn, by passing the gutted villa, but one or two of the more curious climbed up and searched among the shell. The doors had rotted from their hinges and the floors had fallen through. In the music room an ancient harpsichord had been chopped into firewood, but a few keys still lay among the dust. All the books had been toppled from the shelves in the library, the canvases had been slashed, and gilt frames littered the floor.

As the main body of the mob reached the house, it began to cross the wall at all points along its length. Jostled together, the people stumbled into the dry lake, swarmed over the terrace and pressed through the house toward the open doors on the north side.

One area alone withstood the endless wave. Just below the terrace, between the wrecked balcony and the wall, was a dense, six-foot-high growth of heavy thorn bushes. The barbed foliage formed an impenetrable mass, and the people passing stepped around it carefully, noticing the belladonna entwined among the branches. Most of them were too busy finding their footing among the upturned flagstones to look up into the center of the thorn bushes, where two stone statues stood side by side, gazing out over the grounds from their protected vantage point. The larger of the figures was the effigy of a bearded man in a high-collared jacket, a cane under one arm. Beside him was a woman in an elaborate full-skirted dress, her slim, serene face unmarked by the wind and rain. In her left hand she lightly clasped a single rose, the delicately formed petals so thin as to be almost transparent.

As the sun died away behind the house a single ray of light glanced through a shattered cornice and struck the rose, reflected off the whorl of petals onto the statues, lighting up the gray stone so that for a fleeting moment it was indistinguishable from the long-vanished flesh of the statues' originals. ●

GIRLS OF SPACE 1999

(Continued from page 18)

were then left alone, their sphere emerged from the intergalactic phenomenon, and they regained their proper ages. A seemingly miraculous event followed, and the audience was left to ponder the episode's message.

A massive spaceship maneuvered to save Carter's life, and the person responsible was Arre, an elderly woman from the planet Asthera, which was on a collision course with the moon. She later informed Koenig that this presumed catastrophe must not be prevented; it had been foretold that this would cause her race to mutate, and the change "would reverberate through the galaxies for eternity." Against his better judgment, Alpha's commander took a big risk and blocked all attempts to avert the contact. Then, as soon as the two planetary bodies touched, Asthera disappeared and the moon remained unharmed. The long shot paid off, the results were scientifically impossible and the ratings dropped another notch.

Catherine Schell, who was destined to become Mays, guest-starred as the mysterious **Guardian of Piri**, a scantily-clad space siren who seduced the personnel of Alpha. Stating that she wished to free the Earthlings from "human pain," she offered them happiness if they would remain on her world and serve the machines there. All but Koenig succumbed to her hypnotic control, but he later rescued Helena from the living death. Puzzled by the man's rejection, the Guardian summoned her new subjects to attack the commander. In the nick of time, he managed to use his blaster's "kill ray" to blast open the hostess' face. The alluring Guardian was an android, and as soon as it was destroyed the Alphans willingly returned to the moon.

Earth's former satellite became a gun platform in space in **The Last Enemy**. Herein, Dione [Caroline Mortimer] of Beta landed her warship on the moon and began firing missiles at Delta. The ensuing interplanetary battle raged back and forth, and Alpha was caught in the middle until the Bethan craft was crippled. The treacherous Dione fled to the Earth base for safety, where she duped her enemies into agreeing to a

cease fire. Later, enraged when she placed his people in jeopardy again, Koenig used an underhanded trick to kill the beautiful woman and her all-female crew.

After his eagle crashed on the moon, Koenig's mind and astral form were transported to the planet Zerno. While his body lay dying at Alpha, he was informed that our race was believed to be that world's "Missing Link." An anthropologist (Peter Cushing) and his daughter Vana (Joanna Dunham) proceeded to mentally torture their "guest," but it wasn't long before the latter began to fall in love with the primitive. Using the emotions of the 218-year-old gal to his best advantage, the commander managed to convince his captors that it would be best for everyone if he returned to his nomadic home. His dying body was revived as soon as it was whole again.

American actress Joan Collins was cast as Kara in *Mission of the Derians*. When an eagle responded to the emergency call from a huge space-going ark, the Alphans on board found themselves caught up in a diabolical adventure. The alien craft had been traveling for 900 years, and during that time the elite leaders had been feeding on their barbarian subjects. Kara and her fiendish companions were planning to resume their civilization on some hospitable sphere by using the genetic code and sperm bank of the prime of their race. When the Alphans led the barbarians in revolt, though, the hope for the future was destroyed, and Kara's group was forced to join with the others in order to perpetuate the line.

A bald alien female (Isis Blair) played an important role in *War Games*, one of the most exciting episodes of the first series. After Koenig gave the order to intercept and destroy some UFOs that were speeding toward Alpha, their nearby point of origin sent out a fleet of Mark I hawks to devastate the base. Most of the humans were killed during the ensuing attack, and Koenig and Helena flew to the nearby planet to beg for peace. Failing to accomplish this, John lost his temper and was slain. Helena was then taken in by the pair of large-domed beings, and given the power to bring her boyfriend back to life. All of this turned out to be an illusion that had been initiated to make the Earthlings think twice about future hostilities. No-

body had died, and the lesson worked.

As soon as the second season began, Maya of Psychon was introduced. Equipped with the power of molecular transformation, this obvious copy of *Star Trek's* Spock character became Alpha's science officer after *The Metamorph*, which was the premiere episode. In nearly every program that the newcomer appeared in, she changed her form; bushes, tigers, doves, dogs, buck-toothed gorillas, duplicates of fellow Alphans, insects and an assortment of alien creatures were among her metamorphoses. As with Helena, she experienced some intriguing problems during her travels through space. In *New Adam, New Eve*, for instance, a godlike otherworlder nearly succeeded in having her mate with Koenig—even though she loved Verdeschi. She developed a fever, went into a delirium, and lost control of her super-power in *Space Warp*; after becoming a number of dangerous aliens and assaulting everyone within reach, she regained her senses. *The Taybor*, an obese trader from the stars, wanted Maya for his own, and rejected the android that was made in her image; he kidnapped the heroine and caused her robot to explode, but Maya made herself fat and ugly in order to be returned to Alpha. Yes, her life was certainly enriched after she left Psychon.

The Devil's Moon was a penal colony of a planet called Elna. It was totally governed by merciless women, whose job was to guard and control the co-ed prisoners. The officer in charge was Eliza (Hildegard Neil), who eventually fell for a recently-captured Koenig. For quite some time, she had known that all life on her world had been wiped out by an all-consuming disease, yet she had kept this a secret from the inmates and her own personnel. Whenever someone's term of duty or imprisonment was up, she teleported them to Elna, where they immediately died. Ultimately, Koenig convinced the others that she was sacrificing them in order to maintain her authoritative position, and the madwomen chose to return to her home to die.

The only time that Maya was ever terror-stricken was when *The Dorcons* invaded Alpha. These ancient enemies of Psychon had plagued her

civilization for many years, preying on her people in order to obtain their brain stems. They used these to extend their own lives, but the operations always terminated the Psychons. Vanda (Ann Firbank), Supreme Leader of the Federated Worlds of Dorcon, swiped Maya after her battleship wrecked part of Alpha, but Koenig managed to teleport back to her vehicle and find a way to rescue his science officer.

Other foes assaulted Maya in *Dorzak*. Sahala (Jill Townsend), one of two alien women guarding a male prisoner from Psychon, stunned Maya and explained that Dorzak (Lee Montague) was an evil being. Carter found himself attracted to the beautiful woman, and talked her into reviving his friend. Duped into believing that her countryman was innocent, she became careless and got herself captured by the villain. He forced her to teach him the secret of molecular transformation, and ended up fighting her for control of the moon. You can imagine who won.

When Cantar (Peter Duncan) and his wife Zova (Stacy Dornig) were awakened from 3,000 years of suspended animation, they repaid the Alphans by endangering their lives. Kidnapping Verdeschi and Helena and transporting them to Golos (their homeworld), the ungrateful pair turned out to be vicious rebels who had attempted to enslave their own race. During a subsequent battle, Cantar was injured which caused him to rapidly grow older and die. Soon afterward, pretty Zova was kicked out of a spaceship and sent adrift in space.

An unknown murderer resided in Alpha, using her awesome psychokinetic abilities to kill whomever she disliked. At the same time, Koenig suffered from hallucinations of a past tragedy. Eventually, the good guys realized that psychotic Carolyn Powell (Deborah Faller) was using *The Lambda Factor* to gain revenge for her lover's rejection. Toward the conclusion, she took over Main Mission and subjected her superior officers to degrading experiences. Overcoming the alien-induced illusions, the commander confronted the villainess and used her own hatred against her.

A race of super-robots that resembled attractive humans wanted *One Moment of Humanity*. Their leader, Zamara (Billie Whitelaw),

teleported to the moon and stopped all power there until Vandeschi and Helena agreed to return with her to the android's world. On that sphere, the robots had forced their human creators into servitude, and now they wanted to gain emotions so that they would be complete. As Helena, dressed in an alluring gown, was about to be molested by a "male" droid, Maya succeeded in destroying the master computer and rendering the artificial creations immobile. Close call.

From time to time, other women turned up on **Space: 1999**. For example, well-endowed Valerie Leon (of **Blood from the Mummy's Tomb** and **The Spy Who Loved Me**) had a small role in the first season entry, **Death's Other Dominion**. Most female guest-stars were little clothing, which was a technique obviously inspired by **Star Trek**. This is generally referred to as "adult appeal," and it just might have been responsible for the program going into a second year. Whatever the reason, **Space: 1999** had some rather good moments, both visually and verbally. The gorgeous, semi-nude females contributed to the former, and in some ways they were better than Brian Johnson's finest special effects. ●

GIANT MONSTERS VS. ALIEN INVADERS

(Continued from page 54)

tunately [did you guess?], Godzilla came waiting out of nowhere and pounced on Megalon. As he took delight in pummeling the merciless undergrounder, the good guys regained control of Jet Jaguar. Observing that their plans were going awry, the villains sought aid from their friends in space, who dispatched Gigan to help out. As the fat beast sped toward our sphere, something very odd happened. Suddenly, without any explanation, the tin man acquired a mind and will of its own. It grew to enormous size in order to take part in the ensuing battle, and struck out at its own discretion. Together, the robot and the radioactive lizard overcame their foes during an utterly asinine bout, and the people of Mu returned to obscurity.

What followed was kind of different. At the opening of **Godzilla vs. the Cosmic Monster** (1974),

the statue of a shaggy, catlike giant was discovered inside a hidden cave. Referred to as King Seeser (don't you just marvel at the fact that every Japanese monster has its own name?), Oriental legend predicted that it would appear in living form whenever the locals were in danger of annihilation. The carving was taken to a distant city, which just happened to be the target of Mecha-Godzilla — a full sized robot version of what's-his-name. This newcomer was developed by intergalactic invaders, who had established a secret base outside the metropolis. Ever on the alert for such emergencies, Godzilla showed up and tried his deadly breath on the bogus counterpart. During a violent difference of opinion, a malfunction caused the robot to retreat into the sea, but the invaders — who looked very much like apes — forced a captive space technician to effect repairs. In desperation, the endangered people used the statue to awaken the real King Seeser, who made his subtle appearance by crashing through a cliff. Together, he and Godzilla ganged up on Mecha-Godzilla (who, by the way, flew, launched rockets, fired lasers and emitted destructive rays). During the combat, some humans blew up the alien base and therefore stopped the robot dead in its rusty tracks. Godzilla, uncouth as ever, went over and ripped his opponent's head off and kicked it while it was down, and Seeser went away and turned back into a mountain.

Undoubtedly, there will be other Godzilla films in which he goes up against alien invaders. In fact, word has reached the U.S. that **Mecha-Godzilla's Revenge** has been completed. We haven't seen the last of the Big G, although I would prefer that we had.

Most of Gamera's movies never made it to American theaters; we only know about most of them through the efforts of American International-TV [which also brought us things like **The Avengers**]. Confusingly enough, though, they often changed the titles of these gems. As far as this study goes, the only important alterations are that **Gamera vs. Vira** (1967) became **Destroy All Planets**, and **Gamera vs. Guiron** (1969) was released as **Attack of the Monsters**. Try not to get too confused; there might be a test later on.

In **Destroy All Planets**, an alien spaceship journeyed to our world on a mission of vengeance. Somewhere along the line, a previous craft had apparently been destroyed, and the newcomers were determined to make us pay for this. Activating their "super catch ray," they enclosed Gamera in an electrified bubble that he was unable to break out of. During the ensuing 15 minutes, viewers were treated to flashbacks from the previous Gamera epics. Afterward, the aliens captured two young boys, and informed the turtle that they were going to kill the youths unless he did as they instructed. On board the vehicle, the boys attempted to capture one of the humanoids, but he separated his arm from his body and thwarted their plan (neat trick). The turtle soon attacked Tokyo, and the outworlders threatened to use him to destroy our entire race unless the United Nations surrendered. Earth's officials seemed helpless, because they refused to attack the spaceship while the captives were on it [sure!] In fact, humanity actually surrendered because of this! Nonetheless, the invaders commanded Gamera to go ahead and wipe out everybody, and he started to comply. Fortunately, the lads found a way to escape and cut off the fiendish control over the dinosaur. With Gamera battering away at their craft, the invaders shed their human guise and merged into a gargantuan, squid-type creature. Although wounded, Earth's flying defender dragged its opponent into space, where the latter froze to death. And another sinister invasion bit the dust.

Attack of the Monsters sported more awesome creatures, but it was also a lot dumber. It started off by having three children locate a flying saucer that had landed in a wooded area. The two male members of the group went aboard the thing, and were trapped inside as it headed for deep space. When a massive meteor threatened to collide with the ship, Gamera flew by and removed the problem. Eventually, the vessel landed on a distant planet, and the kids saw Guiron, the gigantic guardian of a city, emerge from underground and defeat a flying monster. A pair of attractive women showed up and explained that their world was located on the opposite side of our sun; since both planets had the same

orbit, we were unaware of their existence. As it turned out, they were the last surviving members of their race, and their sphere was dying. Revoltingly enough, the females intended to fly to Earth while using the boy's brains as food. In the nick of time, Gamara arrived and fought the giant puppy, Guiron. After several bouts, the sly turtle used an explosive rocket to make Guiron go all to pieces. By now, the evil gals had been slain, and the children were soon on their way back home. It seems that, with the passing years, Gamara got smarter and smarter. From what I understand, he is now studying for his masters degree at Tokyo University.

If you think that I made up the above, check out the movies for yourself and learn the awful truth. Just make sure that you have a strong stomach, because most of them are simply abysmal. ●

Dark Star (Continued from page 24)

Then on the day of the Dark Star's launch, he had seen the real Pinback, stripped of his spacesuit, throw himself into a vat of Liquid Oxygen. Donning the suit himself, he had attempted to save the astronaut, but, of course, was too late. And when seen in the star suit by the rest of the crew, was assumed to be Pinback and taken aboard. Later, they would not believe his protestations of mistaken identity and eventually, he begins to believe in his new identity himself.

Talby, Doolittle and Boiler all have similar problems. Each has withdrawn into their own universe as the journey has gone on and each has gone a bit more insane from day-to-day. The final scene of Doolittle surfing down happily to his death just underlines the seriousness of his position.

The funniest and longest single sequence in the film is Pinback's confrontation with the alien. The very appearance of the alien is a joke—it is simply a beach ball with a pair of Creature from the Black Lagoon claws stuck on the bottom. The thing bounces around the corridors, occasionally sticking to poor Pinback and tickling him. In this way it draws him to the lower reaches of the ship and finally, in the elevator shaft, gets him hanging in space holding on to the elevator base for dear life.

Of course, at that moment, the

elevator is activated by the ship's computer, and a screaming, terrified Pinback is carried up and down the shaft until, desperately, he is able to detonate the explosive bolts holding the underside hatch in place, and climbs back into the ship.

Seeking revenge, he marches down the ship's corridor and fires a tranquilizer dart at the creature, which promptly punctures and flies around the corridor. The sequence is remarkable for the simple insanity of the alien, and the simply hilarious antics of Pinback.

Another highlight of the film is its "smart" bombs. These are intelligent with a vengeance. Eager, champing at the bit to be off on their missions of destruction, the bombs sound like nothing more than petulant children when told a mission is off. When the final bomb is convinced that his mission has been scrubbed, he literally whines that he won't give up again while he is pulled back into the ship.

When "again" does come, he has to be logically argued into a state of near insanity by Doolittle, a state that leads the bomb to finally decide that he is God, and now is the moment of creation.

The film is full of snide cuts at other science fiction movies. The dead captain, Powell, is preserved in a suspended animation booth and, his brain still alive, he is asked for advice by the rather insecure Doolittle. Finally, when the ship blows up, Powell, in his block of ice, is flung into space, his electronic voice plaintively asking what's going on, his position and appearance similar to the "Star Child" in Kubrick's 2001.

The special effects of *Dark Star* set it off from other essentially amateur productions. Dan O'Bannon, who did the effects for the film (and has since worked on the incomparable *Star Wars* attempted to duplicate the look of big-budget effects, without duplicating their price.

The *Dark Star* itself is a large-scale model, detailed, as are most such, by tank kit parts. The bombs, asteroids, etc. are similarly done. Optical effects, like the asteroid storm, planetary explosions, etc. are done with an economy, and appear much more expensive on the screen.

Even the now mandatory "trip" sequence is done with a low-budget equivalent of the Trumbull sit-scan. All in all the effects compare favor-

ably with any number of big-budget features, and it is these effects that led the film onto the nation's big screens.

Producer/Promoter Jack Harris, off his success with such films as *The Blob*, had early decided that there was money in non-professional productions. He had, in the past, financed such films as *Equinox* for general release. Now, seeing the as yet unfinished *Dark Star*, Harris again put his money into the breach, enabling producer/writer John Carpenter and his partner, effects ace O'Bannon, to complete their long-standing project. Eventually, after some additional footage was shot, and scoring and post-dubbing added, the film was bought by the now-defunct Brynston releasing organization, and paired with *The Devil's Rain* on a drive-in double bill. The rest is history.

Films like *Dark Star* may be the future of the industry. Done in an atmosphere where ingenuity has to replace money, where inventiveness is the keynote, the film holds up as a fine example of all American filmmaking. The novelty and humor of the script, coupled with the fine, though rough performances of the cast and the modestly spectacular special effects, make a film that is both professional and entertaining.

Dark Star is a picture of a future that might be. A future where everything is not shiny, clean and fair. A future of grime and stupidity and insanity. A future much like the present. That picture of this future comes from a group of essentially amateur filmmakers is a remark on the current crop of professionals, and the fact that the film has become a hit with the small group of cinema cognoscenti is a sign that it is perhaps, more than it has appeared to be to the major distributors.

Dark Star is a movie to see, to enjoy, and to think about—if you're lucky enough to have it released in your neighborhood, see it by all means. Become part of "the cult". ●

EXTRATERRESTRIALS

(Continued from page 40)

an impressive variety of creatures, and this is the type of thing I like to see. Variety is the spice of life, and reality can be a terrible bore.

Keep those outer-space monsters coming! ●

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